

# City of Bell Gardens GENERAL PLAN

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# City of Bell Gardens GENERAL PLAN

## Introduction





# INTRODUCTION

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"Pride in the Community" or "Orgullo en la Comunidad" is the vision toward the year 2010 for the City of Bell Gardens. The City of Bell Gardens is as diverse as the people that make up the community.

The City of Bell Gardens General Plan 2010 is a comprehensive, long-range plan that will guide the City and serve as its constitution on into the 21st century. This General Plan sets the stage for the City's future and places Bell Gardens in what promises to be a position of leadership in the region. During the past decades, the Southern California region has experienced many challenges. As we enter the next century, our region will become the largest metropolitan area in the United States and California's economy will be the fourth largest in the world. Bell Gardens is located at the hub of this economic base.

The importance of establishing the City's leadership role in the region while ensuring that the needs of the residents are met is underscored in the City's vision statement, which emphasizes the City's commitment to the community itself. The General Plan's development was initiated by the City Council, which directed the creation of a community based public participation program. This comprehensive planning effort culminated with the completion of the General Plan.

The City's General Plan contains seven sections or elements. Together, the General Plan elements clearly articulate the community's vision for the long term development of the City. The elements and supporting policies are described in the following sections.

## ***Land Use Element***

The Land Use Element designates the general location, distribution, and extent of development. The Land Use Element also indicates standards for population density and development intensities for the various land use categories of land use.

The Land Use Element also focuses on the public improvements such as water, sewer, and other utilities which will serve existing and future development. The Land Use Element includes the following policies:

***Policy 1: The City of Bell Gardens decision-makers shall maintain open communication with the community at all times and shall tirelessly seek input from the residents and property owners regarding the future of the City.***

***Policy 2: The City shall promote compatible residential development, ensure safe housing, emphasize neighborhood identity, and increase pride in neighborhoods.***

***Policy 3: The City shall promote compatible commercial development to emphasize commercial identity and to enhance the appearance, potential economic vitality, and revitalization of the commercial areas in the City.***

***Policy 4: The City shall encourage property owners to maintain and rehabilitate their existing industrial uses and the City shall encourage private investment in the City's industrial economic base while ensuring compliance with necessary environmental requirements.***

***Policy 5: The City shall provide an environment to stimulate local employment, property values, community stability, and the economic vitality of existing local businesses.***

## ***Circulation and Transportation Element***

The Circulation Element describes the roadways, highways, and public utilities that will be expanded





or improved over the life of the Plan. The Circulation and Transportation Element includes the following policies and programs:

**Policy 1:** *The City of Bell Gardens shall strive to maintain a well-balanced street system, with special emphasis on circulation problems in the downtown area, and seeking innovative and model solutions to local transportation needs.*

**Policy 2:** *The City shall encourage the implementation of new and innovative modes of transportation, while striving to provide for the needs of those who require specialized types of service.*

**Policy 3:** *The City shall encourage the development of off-street parking facilities by encouraging the provision of clustered parking areas at the rear of retail establishments and the enforcement of off-street parking standards. The City shall discourage overnight truck parking on residential streets and other designated streets.*

**Policy 4:** *The City shall assist traffic flow along its major streets through improved signalization and other modifications to the City's circulation system.*

#### **Open Space and Recreation Element**

The Open Space and Recreation Element contains programs and measures designed to protect and enhance open space resources in Bell Gardens. The Open Space and Recreation Element includes the following policies and programs:

**Policy 1:** *The City of Bell Gardens shall continue to protect and maintain existing open space used for recreation and shall explore opportunities for providing additional park land.*

**Policy 2:** *The City of Bell Gardens shall expand existing open space through land acquisition and multi-use corridors, particularly in the northwest of the City.*

**Policy 3:** *The City of Bell Gardens shall maximize the City's recreational resources through the adoption of a Quimby Act ordinance.*

#### **Conservation Element**

The Conservation Element establishes policies related to the conservation, development, and use of natural resources in the City. The Conservation Element also focuses on programs and strategies that will be effective in improving local air quality. The Conservation Element includes the following policies and programs:

**Policy 1:** *The City of Bell Gardens shall safeguard the community's heritage by identifying and preserving appropriate structures and sites which have historical significance.*

**Policy 2:** *The City of Bell Gardens shall, to the extent possible, protect remaining ecological resources and enhance those resources through programs in the Open Space and Recreation Element and the Circulation and Transportation Element.*

**Policy 3:** *The City of Bell Gardens shall protect the quality of water in the underground water basin by optimizing open space*





areas with programs adopted as part of the Open Space and Recreation Element.

#### **Safety Element**

The Safety Element provides the foundation for the prevention and emergency preparedness planning in Bell Gardens and identifies those areas that need to be considered in future planning. The Safety Element includes the following policies and programs:

- Policy 1:** *The City of Bell Gardens shall provide for the safety of the community through physical planning and maintaining an adequate level of police, fire, and emergency services and facilities.*
- Policy 2:** *The City of Bell Gardens shall minimize the loss of life, injuries, and property damage through continuing prevention, inspection, and public education programs, including continual update of the City's Emergency Preparedness Plan.*
- Policy 3:** *The City of Bell Gardens, through the County Fire Department, shall protect the community from hazardous materials and waste spills by identifying hazardous materials stored, utilized, or transported in the City and the City shall pursue local and state legislation for greater control of hazardous materials.*

#### **Noise Element**

The Noise Element examines the existing and future noise environment in the City. The Noise Element promotes policies which will reduce noise in the community. The Noise Element includes the following policies and programs:

**Policy 1:** *The City of Bell Gardens shall discourage the incompatible use of property along major transportation lines, and encourage noise reduction measures for existing uses.*

**Policy 2:** *The City of Bell Gardens shall ensure that the noise caused by sources other than traffic are at acceptable levels.*

#### **Housing Element**

The City's Housing Element was adopted separately by the City Council and has been certified by the State Department of Housing and Community Development. The Housing Element and other general plan elements have been reviewed for consistency and the Housing Element has been incorporated into the General Plan.







# City of Bell Gardens GENERAL PLAN

## Section 1 Land Use Element





## SECTION 1: LAND USE ELEMENT

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### INTRODUCTION TO THE LAND USE ELEMENT

The City of Bell Gardens Land Use Element is a state-mandated general plan element and fulfills the requirements of Section 65302(a) of the California Government Code which states that:

*"a land use element [shall designate] the proposed general distribution and general location and extent of the uses of the land for housing, business, industry, open space...."*

This Land Use Element is a long-range guide for development throughout the City. As with the other general plan elements, the Land Use Element indicates the City's goals and policies relative to the location, intensity and type of development.

The Land Use Element's scope is far greater than that of the other elements, although the Land Use Element is directly related to all of them. For example, the need to provide land to meet housing needs is an important issue that must also be addressed in the housing element. The capacity of the existing roadway network (the focus of the Transportation Element), open space and recreation areas (an issue discussed in the Open Space and Recreation Element), areas with earthquake and geologic hazards (discussed in the Public Safety Element) and land uses affected by major noise sources (the focus of the Noise Element) are other examples of the many issues affected by the land use policy.

The Land Use Element of the Bell Gardens General Plan provides a strategy for the coordination and integration of all physical development in the City. The Land Use Element outlines policies and programs which promote orderly growth and minimize the potential for land use conflicts. The Element also provides the framework for land use regulations that govern

the location, type, and intensity of existing and future development in the City. The Land Use Element consists of the following sections:

■ **Land Use Element Policies and Programs.** This section indicates the issues, policies, and implementing programs that apply to both existing and future development in the City. The issues encompass a range of problems and opportunities, including: property rights; future residential, commercial and industrial development; existing conflicting land uses; existing blighted development; and, a lack of identity for commercial areas. The policies set forth corresponding "visions" for each issue area to help the City determine how best to solve those issues. The implementing programs set forth in this section constitute the City's first step toward addressing the issues and following the policies.

■ **Land Use Element Map.** By far the most important component of the Land Use Element is the Land Use Map and supporting standards. This section sets forth the land use designations that will be utilized throughout the entire City, the standards for those designations, and the Land Use Map itself which illustrates the land use designations assigned to individual properties.

■ **Land Use Element Background Report.** This section of the Land Use Element describes the existing in the City relative to land use.







## **LAND USE ELEMENT POLICIES AND PROGRAMS**

A key function of the Land Use Element is to promote land use policies that address existing and future land use issues for the City of Bell Gardens. The following policies acknowledge important concerns of the Bell Gardens community while identifying opportunities for growth and development.

The Bell Gardens Land Use Element policies are arranged around five key issue areas. The policies provide the framework for the City's vision for the future: "Pride in the Community/Orgullo en la Comunidad."

### ***Issue 1: Property Rights***

Bell Gardens residents wish to make their City a vibrant, healthy, and economically strong community for the future generations that may choose to live and work in the City. At the same time, the rights of property owners, business people, and the residents are of paramount concern. Previous land use decision-making in the City had little regard for the community's opinions or rights. Through this General Plan, mechanisms have been incorporated into the General Plan to ensure the community is always heard in future land use planning.

***Policy 1: The City of Bell Gardens decision-makers shall maintain open communication with the community at all times and shall tirelessly seek input from the residents and property owners regarding the future of the City.***

### ***Issue 2: Residential Development***

Development in the City of Bell Gardens is predominantly residential (refer to Exhibit 1-1) with much of this development constructed at

higher densities. These areas frequently include a mix of residential uses with commercial and industrial uses. This mix raises issues concerning safety and the environment.

There are only three areas in the City where cohesive, detached single-family neighborhoods are found. These areas are: (1) the northwest area from Specht Avenue and Agra Street; (2) Lynda Lane; and, (3) the Specht Street area, west of Jaboneria Road.

Much of the residential development in the City was developed prior to the standards and guidelines set forth in the City's current Zoning Code and Building Code. In certain instances, this has led to substandard construction which may eventually result in hazardous conditions to the residents or neighbors of the developments.

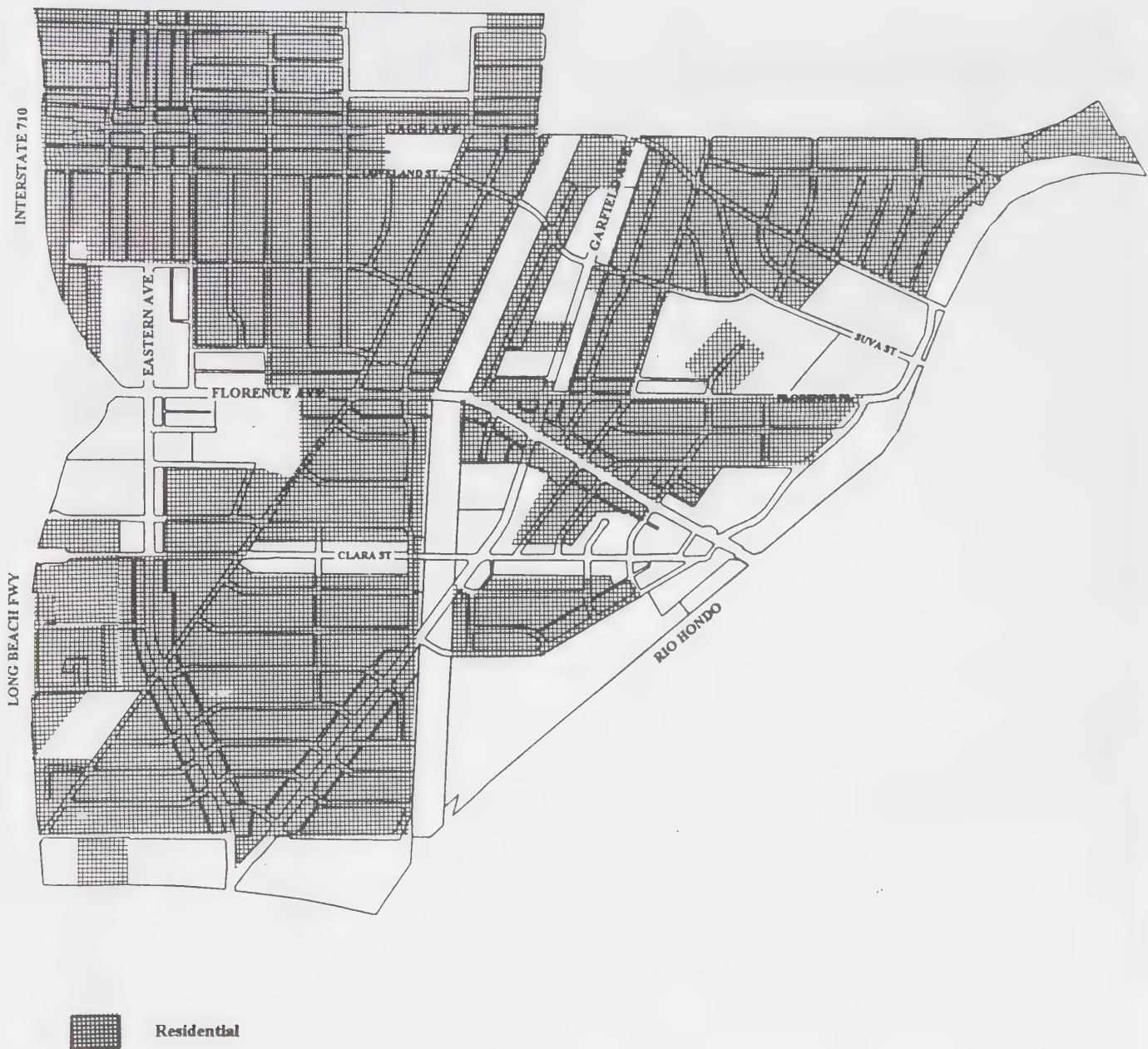
***Policy 2: The City shall promote compatible residential development, ensure safe housing, emphasize neighborhood identity, and increase pride in neighborhoods.***

### ***Issue 3: Commercial Development***

The commercial areas in the City are concentrated along the major arterials and in community and neighborhood shopping centers scattered throughout the City (Exhibit 1-2). In some areas, commercial buildings have fallen into disrepair. In addition, residents must go to neighboring cities to obtain many of the goods and services they use. The proximity of Bell Gardens to the Long Beach Freeway needs to be further exploited by business in the City.

***Policy 3: The City shall promote compatible commercial development to emphasize commercial identity and to enhance the appearance, potential economic***

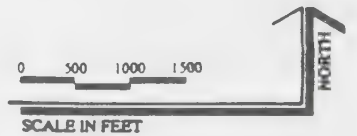
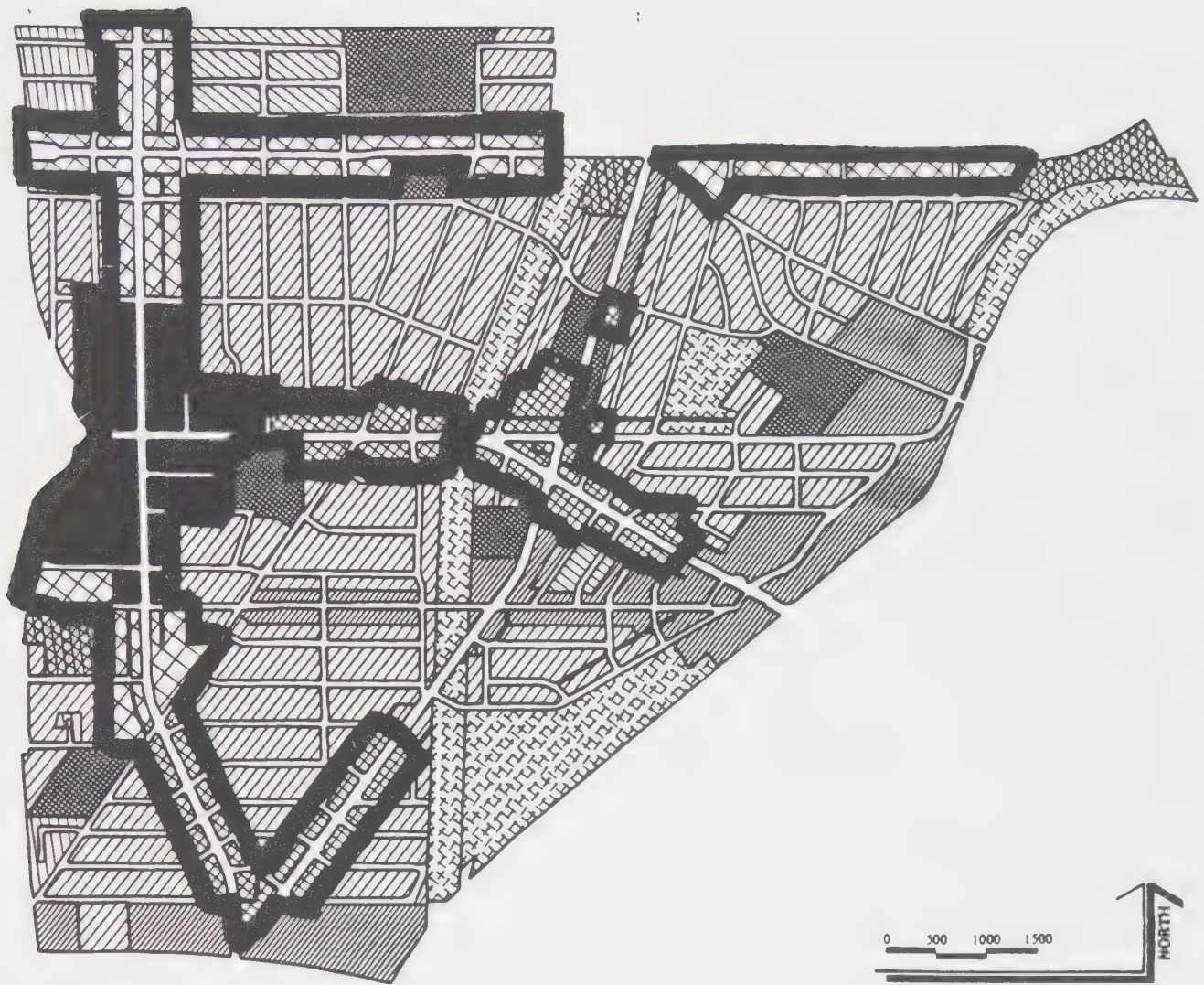




# EXHIBIT 1-1 RESIDENTIAL AREAS IN THE CITY







- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Very High Density Residential
- Mixed Use (Commercial/Residential)
- General Commercial
- Regional Commercial
- Industrial
- Open Space/Parks
- Public/Institutional

## EXHIBIT 1-2 COMMERCIAL AREAS IN THE CITY





*vitality, and revitalization of the commercial areas in the City.*

***Issue 4: Industrial and Manufacturing Development***

The City intends to maintain the existing manufacturing uses that contribute to the City's economic and employment base. Some areas developed as industrial have physical constraints and limitations associated with manufacturing uses. For example, some established industrial developments are unable to expand due to physical limitations of lots. Work remains to make sure industrial properties are well-maintained and that they are good neighbors to the surrounding development that is sensitive to manufacturing activities.

***Policy 4: The City shall encourage property owners to maintain and rehabilitate their existing industrial uses and the City shall encourage private investment in the City's industrial economic base while ensuring compliance with necessary environmental requirements.***

***Issue 5: Promotion of Local Businesses and Jobs***

Gangs continue to be an ever-present problem in Bell Gardens. The City wants to reverse this trend by giving its youth the challenge and opportunity to do so. The City needs to bring in businesses that will not only create a stronger tax base for the City, but will also create and promote jobs for the youth and residents of Bell Gardens.

***Policy 5: The City shall provide an environment to stimulate local employment, property values, community stability, and the economic vitality of existing local businesses.***

The following programs implement the five land use policies discussed previously. These programs also support the City of Bell Gardens vision of "Pride in the Community/Orgullo en la Comunidad." The programs are identified with their corresponding policies in Table 1-1, following this section, because one program may support more than one policy.

***"Bell Gardens Now" Surveys.*** The City will communicate and seek input from the residents and property owners of Bell Gardens through "Bell Gardens Now." A program will be developed to provide for important issues to be published in the newsletter with mail-back survey forms. The follow-up issues of "Bell Gardens Now" will report survey results back to the community. This will help the City decision-makers to get an overview of the community's needs from people that do not always have the time or means to attend the public meetings in person.

**Timing:** 1995  
**Agency:** City Manager  
**Funding:** General Fund

***Building Facade Improvement Program.*** In addition to design guidelines and redevelopment efforts, the City shall adopt a separate Building Facade Improvement Program for the commercial and industrial structures in the City. This program shall provide for incentives and identify strategies for payment of those improvements (block grants and benefit assessment districts) for targeted areas of the City.

**Timing:** 1997  
**Agency:** Community Development and Redevelopment Departments  
**Funding:** General Fund



**Capital Improvement Program.** The City of Bell Gardens maintains a comprehensive infrastructure and public service system to serve its residents. The City's Capital Improvement Program outlines projects needed for public facilities and infrastructure. These improvements may include drainage facilities, roadway and traffic systems, water and sewer lines, and other infrastructure. The program provides a schedule of projects and their funding for a 5-year time period. It is reviewed annually and then is extended for an additional year. The City will continue to prioritize infrastructure and public service projects through the City's Capital Improvement Program.

**Timing:** Periodic  
**Agency:** Public Works Department  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Code Enforcement.** Code enforcement efforts (funding and staffing) will be maintained at current levels. The nuisance abatement policies will be reviewed and updated to ensure that property rights are balanced with health and safety issues. Maintenance efforts in existing residential neighborhoods will be assisted through the code enforcement program and by encouraging property maintenance through private as well as public assistance programs.

**Timing:** Immediate and ongoing  
**Agency:** Community Development Department  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Council Meetings on Cable.** The City Council meetings shall be broadcast on the local cable network to bring more of the residents into the information and decision-making process.

**Timing:** 1996  
**Agency:** City Manager  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Development Monitoring Program.** The City will implement a development monitoring system as part of its approval and environmental review process. The City will review potential impacts of future development.

**Timing:** 1995  
**Agency:** Community Development Department  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Drainage and Sewer Master Plan Updates.** The City shall, as part of the Capital Improvement Program's annual review, update the existing Drainage and Sewer Plans. This will ensure consistency with the Capital Improvement Program and will assist in the ranking of individual projects.

**Timing:** 1995-1996 Fiscal Year  
**Agency:** Public Works  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Incentives to Create Larger Lots.** Larger lots allow greater flexibility in site planning and building design, with less impact on adjacent lots. The City should develop standards which provide incentives, density bonuses, and lower requirements for the assembly of commercial lots. The City will revise the zoning ordinance to reflect these standards.

**Timing:** 1995  
**Agency:** Community Development Department  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Mandatory Findings of Approval.** The City will establish certain mandatory findings of approval that must be made prior to the approval of certain development projects. These findings shall be made at a public hearing before the Planning Commission or City Council and these meetings shall be noticed according to state law. Property owners adjacent to the development and within a 500-foot radius from the edge of the property line of the project area will be notified. Staff reports to





the decision-making body will outline the findings and analyses whether or not the findings can be made.

**Timing:** 1995  
**Agency:** Community Development Department  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Nonconforming Ordinance.** The City shall revise its Nonconforming Ordinance to ensure that it meets current objectives of the community.

**Timing:** Ongoing/1995  
**Agency:** Community Development Department  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Pre-application Meetings.** All new developments are subject to development review to evaluate their compliance with City standards and ordinances. Pre-application meetings provide the City and developer a chance to informally talk about a project before any commitment regarding future development is made. This process saves time and money by informing the developer of what the City expects and the process that must be followed. Also, it informs the City of proposed developments early in the process. Pre-application meetings provide an opportunity to develop cooperation and to bring about higher quality development. The City will continue to encourage pre-application "development review" meetings with developers. This will allow the City to learn about proposed projects and the developer to the requirements of the City.

**Timing:** Ongoing  
**Agency:** Community Development and Redevelopment  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Redevelopment.** The City will continue redevelopment efforts associated with the

implementation of the Redevelopment Project Area (Exhibit 1-3). The City will encourage the further development of industrial and commercial projects in suitable locations to strengthen the City's tax and employment bases. The City shall promote the economic vitality of the commercial districts with land use controls and land use incentives. The City will also provide incentives for the modernization of shopping centers and industrial centers.

The City will encourage private market forces to consolidate and modernize industrial development without increasing, substantially, the proportion of land area designated for industrial use, encouraging compatible industrial developments in areas of primary accessibility which have minimal impact on adjacent residential areas. Through that same authority, the City shall encourage and provide for the orderly transition of existing downtown residential areas to commercial uses and accommodate the relocation needs (pursuant to requirements of State Law) of residents displaced by such transition.

The Redevelopment Agency, the Community Development Department, and the City Manager's Office will also identify and actively pursue the relocation of certain uses to industrial, commercial, and residential, as the case may be.

**Timing:** Ongoing  
**Agency:** Community Development, Redevelopment  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Sidewalk and Parkway Development and Maintenance Program.** Tree-lined streets are uniquely attractive and help create a sense of place. The City will continue to maintain existing sidewalks and parkways and encourage property owners abutting these areas to maintain parkway





trees through public information programs such as flyers, newsletter articles, and the like. By developing and maintaining a complete system of sidewalks, the City of Bell Gardens will be able to improve pedestrian safety and enhance the visual quality of streets. In addition to the continued implementation of the adopted Beautification Plan (Exhibit 1-4), the City will identify areas and lots where sidewalks and parkways need to be developed or enhanced and will encourage property owners to build the sidewalks, where possible. Otherwise, the City will explore other funding mechanisms, such as including the needed improvements into the City's Capital Improvement Program. Priority will be given to sidewalks that serve parks, schools, and other routes with high pedestrian traffic.

**Timing:** 1996

**Agency:** Public Works and Parks Department

**Funding:** General Fund, Special Revenue Fund

**Sign Ordinance Review.** The City's Sign Ordinance regulates the type, size, and number of signs in Bell Gardens. The sign ordinance protects the aesthetic qualities of neighborhoods and promotes driver safety and convenience. The City of Bell Gardens will identify signage problems in the City and will determine if they are allowed under current sign standards. Changes should be made to the ordinance to prevent the proliferation of unwanted signs. The sign design guidelines of the CBD Urban Design Plan will be taken into consideration when reviewing the City's Sign Ordinance.

**Timing:** As part of the Zoning revisions

**Agency:** Community Development and Code Enforcement

**Funding:** General Fund

**Streamline Permit Process Program.** Permit processing constitutes a large portion of the time and costs associated with development. By

shortening the permit process, the City can lessen the cost of development. This can lead to a greater number of development projects and the construction of more affordable housing units. The City will continue to streamline permit processing to save time and lessen the costs associated with obtaining permits.

**Timing:** 1995

**Agency:** Community Development and Public Works

**Funding:** General Fund

**Urban Design Program:** City staff will continue to implement the adopted CBD Urban Design Plan and will examine the feasibility of extending the program to other areas of the City (Exhibit 1-5). City staff will also formulate design guidelines for commercial and industrial areas in other areas of the City. These design guidelines will promote economic vitality and at the same time preserve the rights of the property owners and protect residential neighborhoods from the encroachment of incompatible uses. Through these Design Guidelines, the City will promote and encourage commercial and industrial uses to be designed in centers or like groups for the convenience of the public and to avoid creating nuisances among adjacent land owners. The Design Guidelines will promote the development of a revitalized image for the City of Bell Gardens through the adoption of landscaping and architecture regulations which establish minimum standards and requirements for quality, design and appearance.

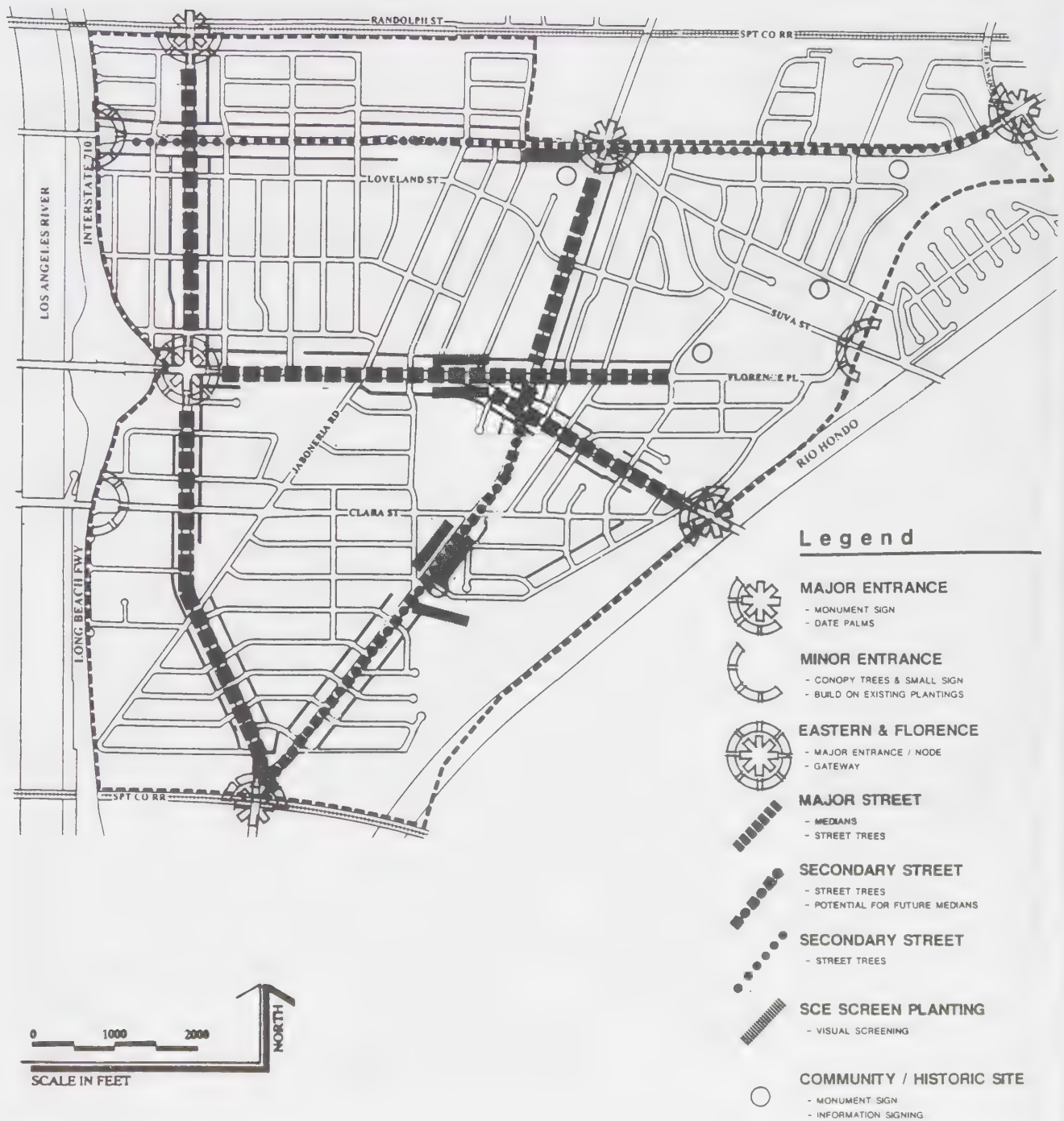
**Timing:** 1995

**Agency:** Public Works and Community Development

**Funding:** General Fund

**Zoning Ordinance Revision:** The City will undertake the necessary Zoning Ordinance revision to ensure implementation of the policies of the





## EXHIBIT 1-4 BEAUTIFICATION PLAN - MAJOR ELEMENTS









General Plan. In particular, the City will: (1) adopt zoning regulations to retain predominantly single family neighborhoods in their lower density configuration; (2) prohibit tandem development residential design as well as development of higher densities on lots designed for single family uses; (3) zone higher density areas up to the R-3 designation which would allow up to 66 percent of the maximum land use density recommended by the Land Use Map; (4) permit a higher zoning category and greater density of up to 100 percent of the permitted Land Use Map density if the new development plans demonstrate acceptable benefits to the City;

(5) centralize new commercial development in the Regional Commercial area and in other areas where appropriate; (6) provide appropriately located areas for office uses, retail stores and service establishments which meet the needs of the community; and (7) restrict industrial building and uses to industrially zoned properties only and restrict industrial uses to lots of sufficient size (industrial areas should be restricted for light industrial and medium industrial purposes).

**Timing:** 1995 - 1996

**Agency:** Community Development Department

**Funding:** General Fund

**TABLE 1-1  
LAND USE ELEMENT POLICIES AND PROGRAMS MATRIX**

Policies	Programs
<i>Policy 1: The City of Bell Gardens decision-makers shall maintain open communication with the community at all times and shall tirelessly seek input from the residents and property owners regarding the future of the City.</i>	"Bell Gardens Now" Surveys Council Meetings on Cable Mandatory Findings of Approval
<i>Policy 2: The City shall promote compatible residential development, ensure safe housing, emphasize neighborhood identity, and increase pride in neighborhoods.</i>	Code Enforcement Design Review Development Monitoring Program Nonconforming Ordinance Redevelopment Urban Design Program Zoning Ordinance Revisions
<i>Policy 3: The City shall promote compatible commercial development to emphasize commercial identity and to enhance the appearance, potential economic vitality, and revitalization of the commercial areas in the City.</i>	Building Facade Improvement Program Code Enforcement Design Review Nonconforming Ordinance Redevelopment Sign Ordinance Review Urban Design Program Zoning Ordinance Revisions





**TABLE 1-1**  
**LAND USE ELEMENT POLICIES AND PROGRAMS MATRIX (continued)**

Policies	Programs
<i>Policy 4: The City shall encourage property owners to maintain and rehabilitate their existing industrial uses and the City shall encourage private market forces to invest in the City's industrial economic base while ensuring compliance with necessary environmental requirements.</i>	Building Facade Improvement Program Code Enforcement Design Review Incentives to Create Larger Lots Nonconforming Ordinance Redevelopment Sidewalk and Parkway Development and Maintenance Program Sign Ordinance Review Streamline Permit Process Program Urban Design Program Zoning Ordinance Revisions
<i>Policy 5: The City shall provide an environment to stimulate local employment, property values, community stability, and the economic vitality of existing local businesses.</i>	Building Facade Improvement Program Capital Improvement Program Economic Development Program Incentives to Create Larger Lots Master Plan of Streets and Highways Pre-Application Meetings Redevelopment Sidewalk and Parkway Development and Maintenance Program Streamline Permit Process Program Zoning Ordinance Revisions

Source: David Evans and Associates, Inc., March 1994



## LAND USE ELEMENT MAP

The Land Use Map is the most important component of the City of Bell Gardens General Plan. The Land Use Map indicates the location and extent of permitted development in the City.

In Bell Gardens, the Land Use Map largely corresponds to the current development in the City since the focus of this General Plan is aimed at enhancing existing development and redevelopment.

The Land Use Map indicates the location and extent of permitted development throughout the City. Land use categories (or "designations") on the map indicate the type of development that is permitted in specific areas of the City. These land use categories also contain standards for development intensity. The reason for these standards is to ensure that citizens, staff, and decision-makers clearly understand the implications of the Land Use Element in terms of both existing and future development.



Development intensity refers to the size or degree of development possible within a land use category. For example, development intensity standards may use the ratio of a building's floor area to the total lot area (referred to as a floor area ratio), the number of dwelling units per acre, or traffic generation. The floor area ratio standards for Bell Gardens were derived from development standards included in the Zoning Ordinance.

The Land Use Map for the City of Bell Gardens (shown in Exhibit 1-6) consists of ten categories of land use. Four of the land use designations relate to residential development, two categories correspond to commercial development, a single category designates both commercial and residential development to be combined in mixed-use settings, one category is designated for industrial developments, and there are two categories each corresponding to open space or institutional uses. Table 1-2 below summarizes the land use designations on the City's General Plan Land Use Map.

TABLE 1-2  
SUMMARY OF GENERAL PLAN LAND USE MAP DESIGNATIONS

Low Density Residential	Areas designated as <b>Low Density</b> on the land use map correspond to single family areas that include land surrounding Lanto and Agra Street and the land surrounding Specht Street and Lynda Lane. Up to 8.7 dwelling units per acre, can be constructed.
Medium Density Residential	This category applies to single family and multi-family units. Some of the areas designated as <b>High Density Residential</b> include parcels along Watcher, Lanto and Agra Streets. Density guidelines are 9 to 15 dwelling units per acre.
High Density Residential	This category applies to multi-family units. Most of the residential areas in the City are designated as <b>Medium Density Residential</b> . Density guidelines are 20 to 30 dwelling units per acre.
Very High Density Residential	This designation applies to multi-family units constructed as gross densities of over 30 units per acre. Most of the area designated as <b>Very High Density Residential</b> .
Mixed-use	<b>Mixed-use</b> refers to a combination of commercial and residential uses working in tandem to supply the community with much needed lower-income housing and commercial facilities. This designation has been concentrated on parts of Eastern Avenue and parts of Gage Avenue. Residential densities correspond to the High Density Residential designations and the commercial uses would use a guideline of a 4.0 floor area ratio.
General Commercial	<b>General Commercial</b> refers to a range of commercial uses located at throughout the City. Development density follows a guideline of a 4.0 floor area ratio.
Regional Commercial	The area at the hub of commercial activity in the City has been designated as <b>Regional Commercial</b> . This area is located at the intersection of Florence and Eastern Avenues. Development density follows a guideline of a 5.0 floor area ratio.
Industrial	The City contains a mix of <b>Industrial</b> uses, with these areas located throughout the City. Development density follows a guideline of a 2.0 floor area ratio.





**TABLE 1-2**  
**SUMMARY OF GENERAL PLAN LAND USE MAP DESIGNATIONS (continued)**

Public/Institutional	The <b>Public/Institutional</b> category applies to a wide range of public uses including public schools, private schools, churches, City Hall, and other public and quasi-public uses.
Open Space/Parks	The <b>Open Space/Parks</b> category refers to public parks and private land reserved for open spaces.
Source: City of Bell Gardens General Plan Map, 1994.	

The Zoning Ordinance is the primary implementation mechanism for the General Plan Land Use Policy. The zoning ordinance regulates all development in the City by designating areas where specific land uses are allowed. The zoning ordinance consists of two primary components: the development standards and the zoning map. The development standards

are detailed in the ordinance text and include lists of permitted uses and various standards governing setbacks, lot sizes, building height, etc. The zoning map is very specific in that every parcel of land in the City is assigned a zone district designation. Table 1-3 indicates the corresponding zone designations to the General Plan Land Use Map designations.

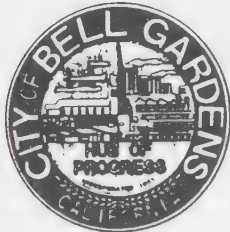
**TABLE 1-3**  
**SUMMARY OF GENERAL PLAN LAND USE DESIGNATIONS AND ZONING DESIGNATIONS**

General Plan Land Use Designation	Summary	Corresponding Zoning Designation	Area (in acres)
Low Density Residential	Single-family residential 8.7 du/acre maximum	R-1 R-PD	19.7
Medium Density Residential	Single and multi-family residential 9-15 du/acre maximum	R-2	35.2
High Density Residential	Multi-family residential 20-30 du/acre maximum	R-3	558.2
Very High Density Residential	Multi-family residential over 30 du/acre	No existing zoning designation	31.3
Mixed-use	Commercial and residential uses Floor Area Ratio of 4.0 and 20-30 du/acre for residential	R-3 R-4 CS	88.1



**TABLE 1-3  
SUMMARY OF GENERAL PLAN LAND USE DESIGNATIONS  
AND ZONING DESIGNATIONS (continued)**

General Plan Land Use Designation	Summary	Corresponding Zoning Designation	Area (in acres)
General Commercial	A range of commercial uses throughout the City  Floor Area Ratio of 4.0	C3 CS CM	60.8
Regional Commercial	High intensity commercial at Florence and Eastern  Floor Area Ratio of 5.0	C3 C4	61.3
Industrial	Light industrial and limited heavy industrial activity  Floor Area Ratio of 2.0	M-1 M-2 M-PD	157.8
Public/Institutional	To maintain and enhance the existing facilities	No existing zone designation	89.1
Open Space/Parks	Conservation purposes	No existing zone designation	139.6



## LAND USE ELEMENT BACKGROUND REPORT

The Land Use Element Background Report provides an overview of the issues and opportunities that will affect land use planning in the City. This Background Report contains information concerning development trends,

existing development, the zoning ordinance, redevelopment, urban design, buildout projections, and infrastructure available to serve existing and future development.

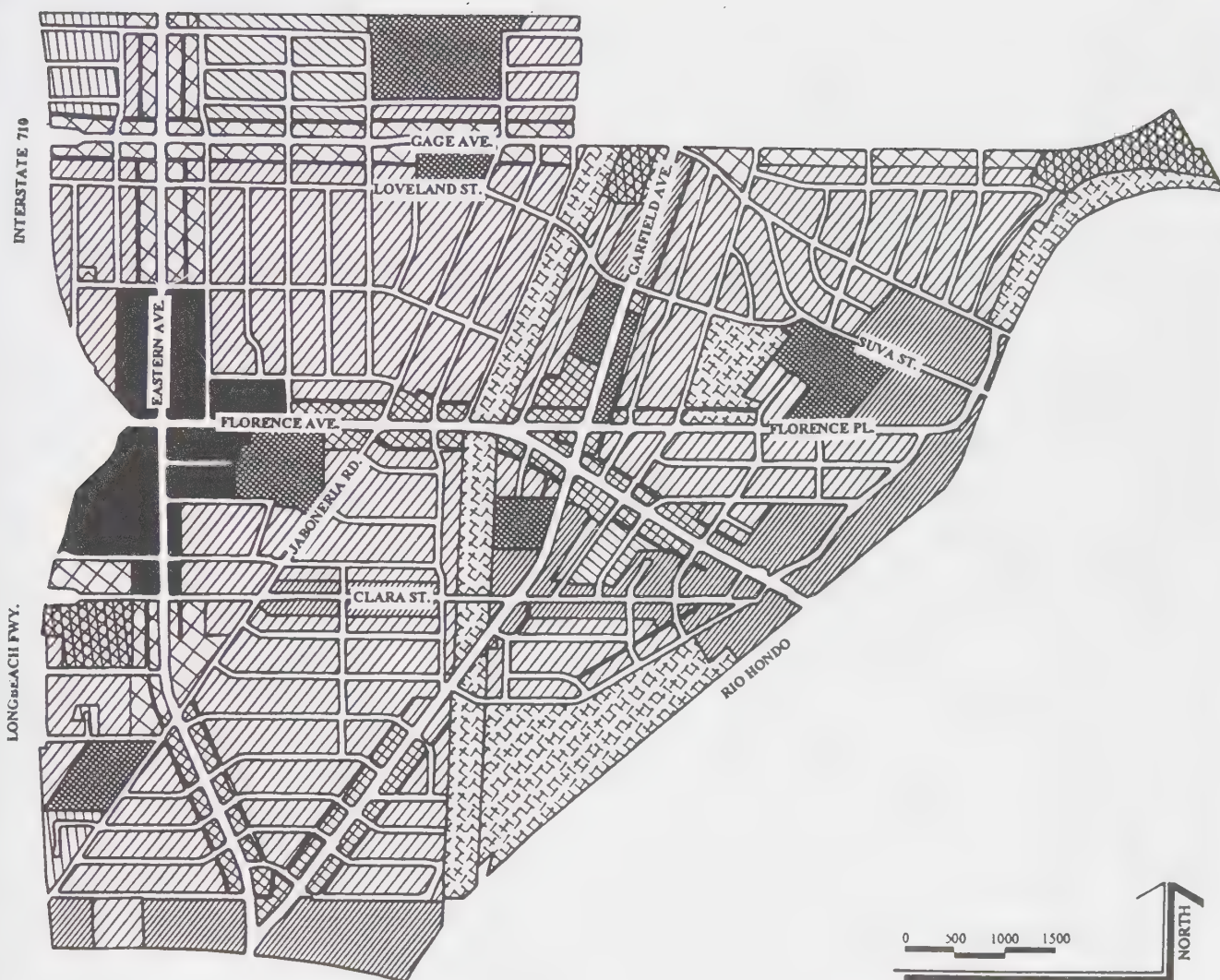
### Development Trends

The City of Bell Gardens is located in southeastern Los Angeles County (see Exhibits 1-7 and 1-8), one of the most densely developed areas in the western United States. The City is located in the midst of an industrial belt that begins just south of downtown Los Angeles and extends eastward through the Cities of Vernon, Commerce, Montebello, Bell Gardens, Pico Rivera, Bell Gardens, and Santa Fe Springs.

The history of Bell Gardens began with the Rancho San Antonio, a 29,500-acre land grant that







- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Very High Density Residential
- Mixed Use (Commercial/Residential)
- General Commercial
- Regional Commercial
- Industrial
- Open Space/Parks
- Public/Institutional

0 500 1000 1500

SCALE IN FEET

NORTH

## EXHIBIT 1-6 LAND USE MAP



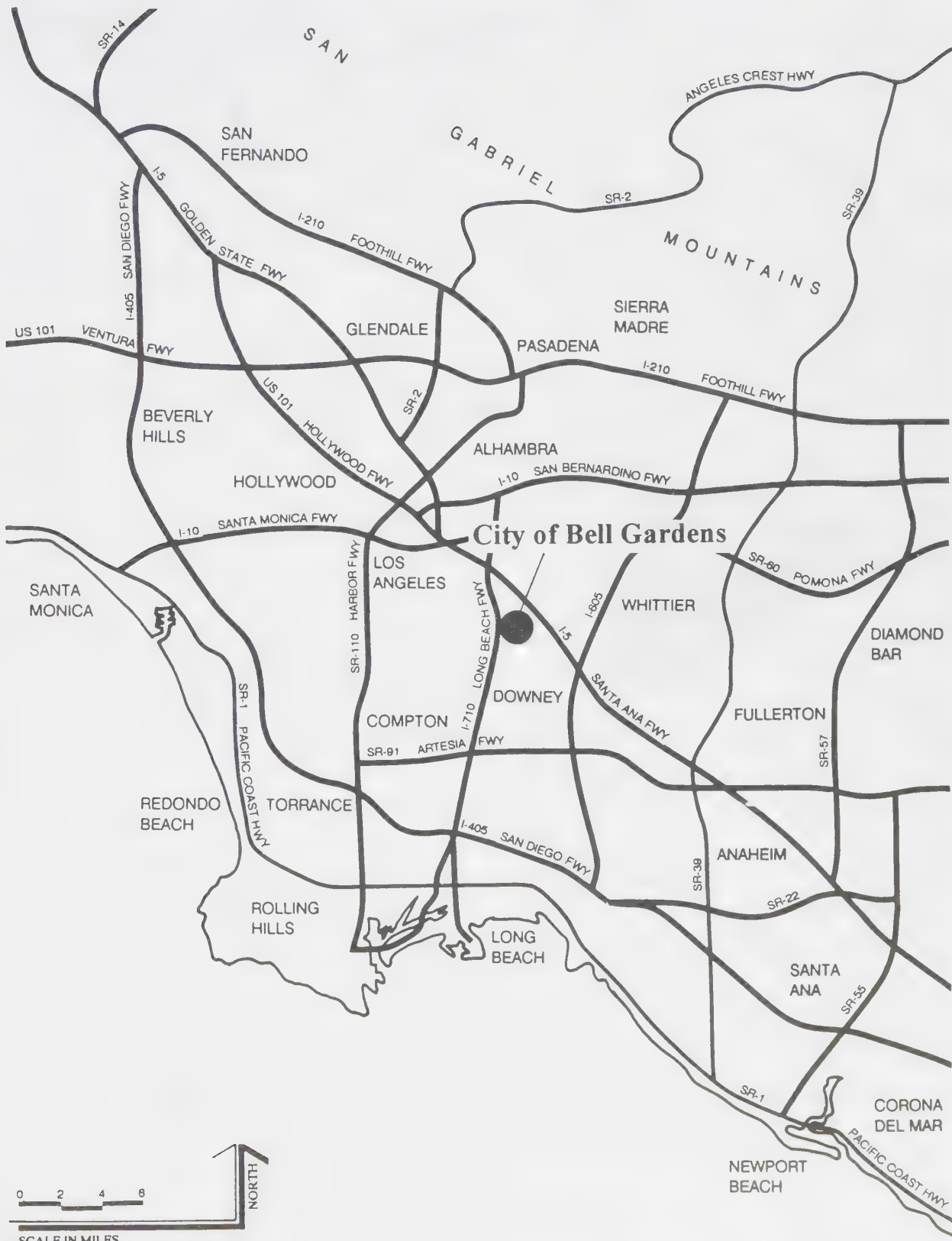


EXHIBIT 1-7  
REGIONAL LOCATION





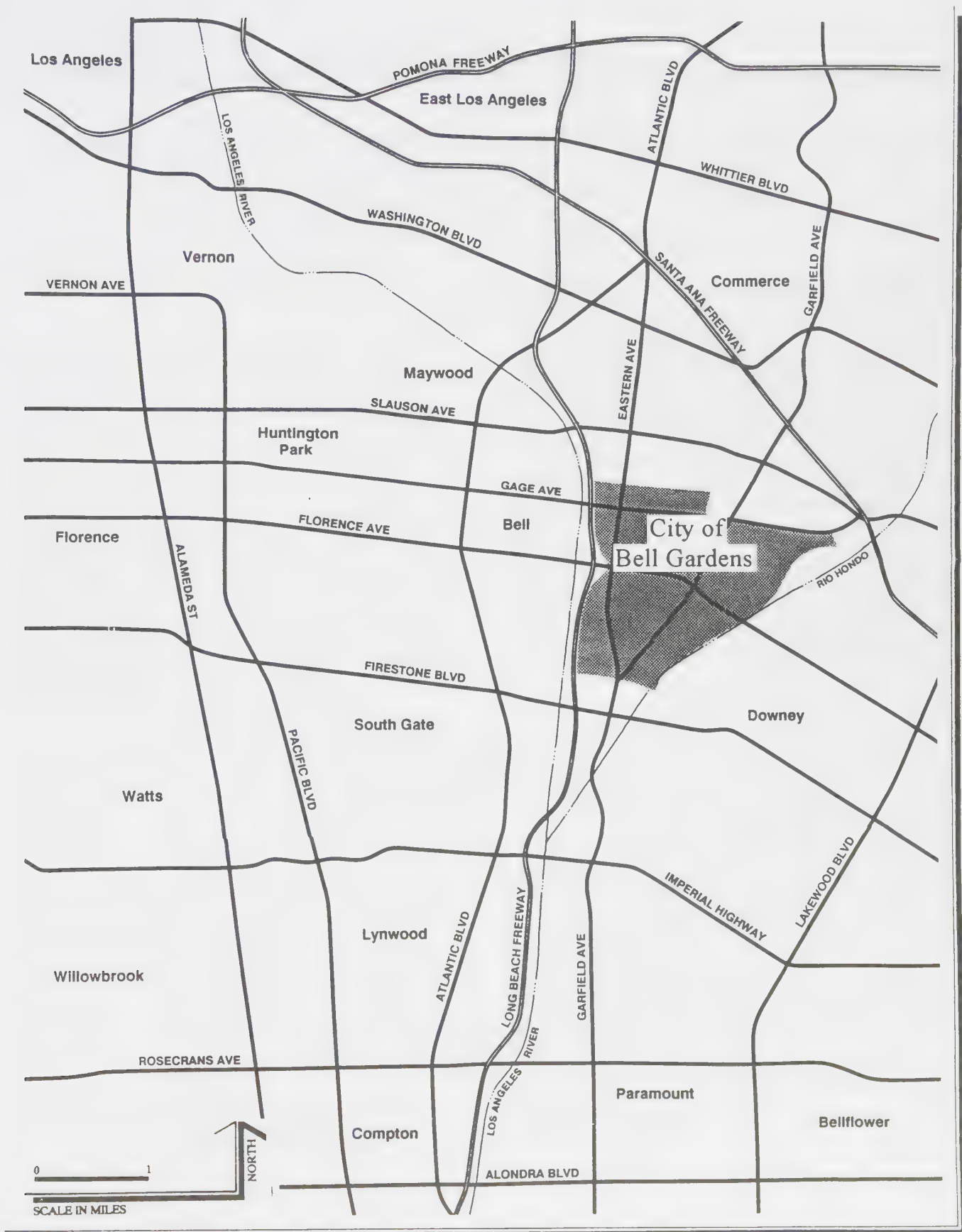


EXHIBIT 1-8  
VICINITY MAP



was awarded to Antonio Maria Lugo, a Spanish soldier. Lugo established a rancho near the fork of the Rio Hondo and Los Angeles Rivers. O.C. Beck, a land developer, offered this land for as little as \$20 down and \$10 per month. As a result, the old rancho was subdivided with many small farms and ranch homes.

During the early years of this century, gardeners and small farms in the Bell Gardens region produced quality vegetables for regional markets. These agricultural communities were short-lived, however, due to the urbanization that followed in the 1920s and 1930s. Nearby Vernon, which incorporated in 1905 for the sole purpose of promoting industrial development, fueled the development of surrounding communities which provided housing and services to those working in the industrial belt. By the 1930s, the Bell Gardens area became an important residential area. The defense plants of the 1940s brought prosperity to the region and Bell Gardens became largely developed with single family homes, bungalow courts and strip commercial

development along major arterials. By 1961, with a population of close to 30,000 persons, the City of Bell Gardens was incorporated.

### Existing Development

In January 1993, a land use survey was performed. The results of the survey are summarized in Table 1-4. The residential areas did not always fall into the existing General Plan designation categories or the existing Zoning Ordinance categories. The survey revealed a mix of single family developments with multi-family developments, with densities ranging from one unit per lot to twenty-two units per development. In response to this mix of residential uses (and only for the purposes of this Background Report), new categories were used to illustrate the density range for a given block. Also, a Public/Quasi Public category was created to call out civic and education uses. A category of Parks/Open Space/Vacant was used to assist in the evaluation of available open space land in the City.

TABLE 1-4 1993 EXISTING LAND USES		
LAND USE CATEGORY	Acres	Percent of City Total
Residential (1 - 4 units per lot)	167.1	10.9
Residential (1 - 8 units per lot)	249.4	16.3
Residential (1 - 16 units per lot)	190.5	12.5
Residential (1 - 20 units per lot) <sup>1</sup>	88.7	5.8
Neighborhood Commercial	0.4	negligible
General Commercial/Office Professional <sup>2</sup>	138.7	9.1
Industrial	133.3	8.7
Public/Quasi-public	100.9	6.6





TABLE 1-4 1993 EXISTING LAND USES (continued)		
LAND USE CATEGORY	Acres	Percent of City Total
Parks/Open Space/Vacant	181.2	11.4
Streets	279.4	18.3
<b>TOTAL</b>	1529.6	100%
<sup>1</sup> Includes mobile home parks. <sup>2</sup> The two categories were combined due to the limited amount of Office Professional uses. Source: David Evans and Associates, Inc. 1993.		

Several residential neighborhoods have retained their identity as lower density residential areas despite historic development practices. The majority of residential neighborhoods were historically zoned "R-3" and developed with single family developments that have, over the years, been redeveloped or recycled to higher densities. The resulting development is characterized by a mix of single family, duplex, triplex, tandem and multiple family developments.

Commercial uses in the City are limited, to a great extent, to strip or highway commercial development. The primary commercial areas in the City consist of major retail commercial activities located along Eastern and Florence Avenues. Smaller concentrations of retail commercial development are found along Garfield Avenue, Gage Avenue, Florence Place, Clara Street, and Foster Bridge Boulevard.

### *Zoning Ordinance*

The Zoning Regulations of the City of Bell Gardens are the primary implementation mechanism for the General Plan Land Use Element. The current Zoning Regulations control development in the City by designating areas where specific land uses are allowed, compatible with the General Plan Land Use Element. The Zoning Regulations consist of two primary components: the Zoning Ordinance and the Zoning Map. The Zoning Ordinance consists of detailed development standards, including lists of permitted and conditional uses and various standards governing setbacks, minimum lot sizes, building height, etc. The Zoning Map is a parcel specific map with each and every parcel of land assigned a zone designation. The Bell Gardens Zoning Map contains sixteen zones. Four of these zones apply to residential development, one applies to agriculture, four apply to commercial development, and four zones are industrial. Table 1-5 summarizes the zone designations.



TABLE 1-5  
SUMMARY OF EXISTING ZONE DISTRICTS

Zoning Category	Symbol	Permitted Uses
Single Family Zone	R-1	Single family dwelling units
Low Density Multiple Zone	R-2	Single family dwelling units, duplexes, and triplexes
Medium Density Multiple Zone	R-3	Apartments, single family dwelling units, duplexes, triplexes, public parks and playgrounds
General Commercial	C-2	Banks, savings and loans, churches, day care centers, medical clinics, fire stations, homes for aged, children and seniors, education, libraries, offices, public parks, police stations, restaurants
Neighborhood Commercial Zone	C-1	Auto service stations, retail shops, churches, day care centers, restaurants, medical clinics, offices
Light Industrial	M-1	Automobile car washes, sales, & rentals; building materials sales, bus terminals, storage & rentals; carnivals, circuses & fairgrounds; contractors yards, equipment rental, golf courses, lumber yards, public utility yards, skating rinks; truck storage, sales and rental; stations, bus, railroad and taxi
Public Institutional	P-1	Off-street parking, employee recreation areas, accessory signs, landscaping
Streets	N/A	
Source: City of Bell Gardens Zoning Map.		

### Redevelopment

The City of Bell Gardens Redevelopment Agency has been active since 1972. The current redevelopment areas are shown in Exhibit 1-3. The Redevelopment Plan for the Bell Gardens Central City Redevelopment Project (Redevelopment Project Area 1) established the area west of El Selinda Avenue, between Gage Avenue and Clara Street as the City's first redevelopment project area, in 1978. The Plan set goals and criteria for development within the Central City area.

The Redevelopment Agency has been involved in two major projects in the Central City Redevelopment Area. The first project was the

Bicycle Club, which has been open since late November 1984, and the Toys-R-Us center opened operations shortly thereafter. In 1986-87, the Redevelopment Agency pursued the acquisition of properties to the south of the Bicycle Club. Other projects include Flynn's Industrial Catering, Wyss Brothers Metal Products, Wilcox Machine Company, and J. Berg Enterprises. The Bicycle Club continues to be the City's leading single source of revenue.

The Florence Avenue and Eastern Avenue commercial districts have long been the subject of redevelopment efforts. These areas serve as the primary entrance to the City due to their proximity to the Long Beach Freeway and the intersection of the two major highways. A downtown





revitalization study, prepared in 1978, identified a number of problems in this area including the highway commercial orientation of businesses, a significant lack of available parking, and an inappropriate mix of commercial and residential land uses. In 1980, plans were initiated to revitalize the downtown area. However, a 1983 survey of merchants and property owners in the area indicated relatively low interest in participating in the area's revitalization.

### **Urban Design**

In recent years, the City of Bell Gardens has undertaken steps to revitalize the City's commercial areas and improve the quality of life in the City through the implementation of urban design principles. Urban design guidelines set forth in the City of Bell Gardens CBD Urban Design Plan, developed in May of 1987, established standards to revitalize the City's streetscapes, commercial, and residential development within the commercial area.

In 1984 and 1985, two large-scale developments spearheaded the revitalization of the City's commercial districts. The Bicycle Club gambling casino and the Bell Gardens Shopping Plaza highlight those revitalization efforts for commercial development in the City.

A Beautification Plan, developed in 1989, provided a framework to extend urban design principles throughout the City (Exhibit 1-4). The Beautification Plan focused upon six basic components to be implemented as individual projects or in conjunction with other development. The six components of the Beautification Plan include:

- Entrances to the City;
- Landscaped Median and Traffic Islands;

- Central Business District Landscaping;
- Southern California Edison Right-of-Way Screen Planting;
- Street Tree Plan; and
- Public Information Signing.

### **Infrastructure**

#### **Water**

Two utilities, Park Water Company and Southern California Water Company, provide water service to the City of Bell Gardens. Bell Gardens Water Company serves approximately 25 percent of the City (the northerly area) and Southern California Water Company serves the remaining 75 percent (see Exhibit 1-9). Both companies utilize two major sources:

- **Imported Water.** Both companies have connections to the Metropolitan Water District system, which provides 75 percent of the City's demand.
- **Wells.** Both companies have several local wells from underground aquifers to provide the remaining 25 percent of the City's needs.

The wells are located in the Central Basin Pressure Area while the imported water is delivered by the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD) through metered connections operated by the Central Basin Municipal Water District (CBMWD). Over a ten-year period (prior to the City of Bell Gardens' 1988 Water Master Plan Update), approximately 60 percent of the total





## EXHIBIT 1-9

### WATER COMPANY SERVICE AREAS





water supply for the City was taken from the MWD system.

Eight active wells exist within this water system. Seven of these wells belong to the Southern California Water Company and one belongs to the Park Water Company. The ground water basin is adjudicated and extraction is limited by terms of an agreement between water producers in the Central Basin to prevent overdraft of the underground water supply. In addition to monitoring the withdrawal of ground water from the aquifers, water producers have organized the Central Basin Water Replenishment District which has undertaken a program of recharging the underground water basin using imported water from MWD and reclaimed wastewater.

The wells are capable of producing a combined flow of approximately 5,400 gpm, although, less than 40 percent of the total City water demand has been supplied by the wells in recent years. The barrier and basin recharge projects which influence underground water supplies in the Bell Gardens area are directed by the Central and West Basin Water Replenishment District. This District is primarily concerned with maintaining the yield of the basin rather than increasing the availability of water. No treatment other than the addition of chlorine is given to the well water.

The Metropolitan Water District delivers water to both Park Water Company and Southern California Water Company through the Middle Feeder. This major MWD transmission main begins at the Weymouth Softening and Filtration Plant at La Verne and conveys water to the Garvey Reservoir. From that reservoir, the Middle Feeder passes through the cities of Monterey Park, Montebello, and Commerce before reaching Bell Gardens. The pipeline operates entirely by gravity from the Garvey Reservoir, and so, is unaffected by local or regional electrical power outages. MWD

anticipates that the Middle Feeder (which has a capacity of approximately 250 cubic feet per second) will have capacity in excess of future predicted demands.

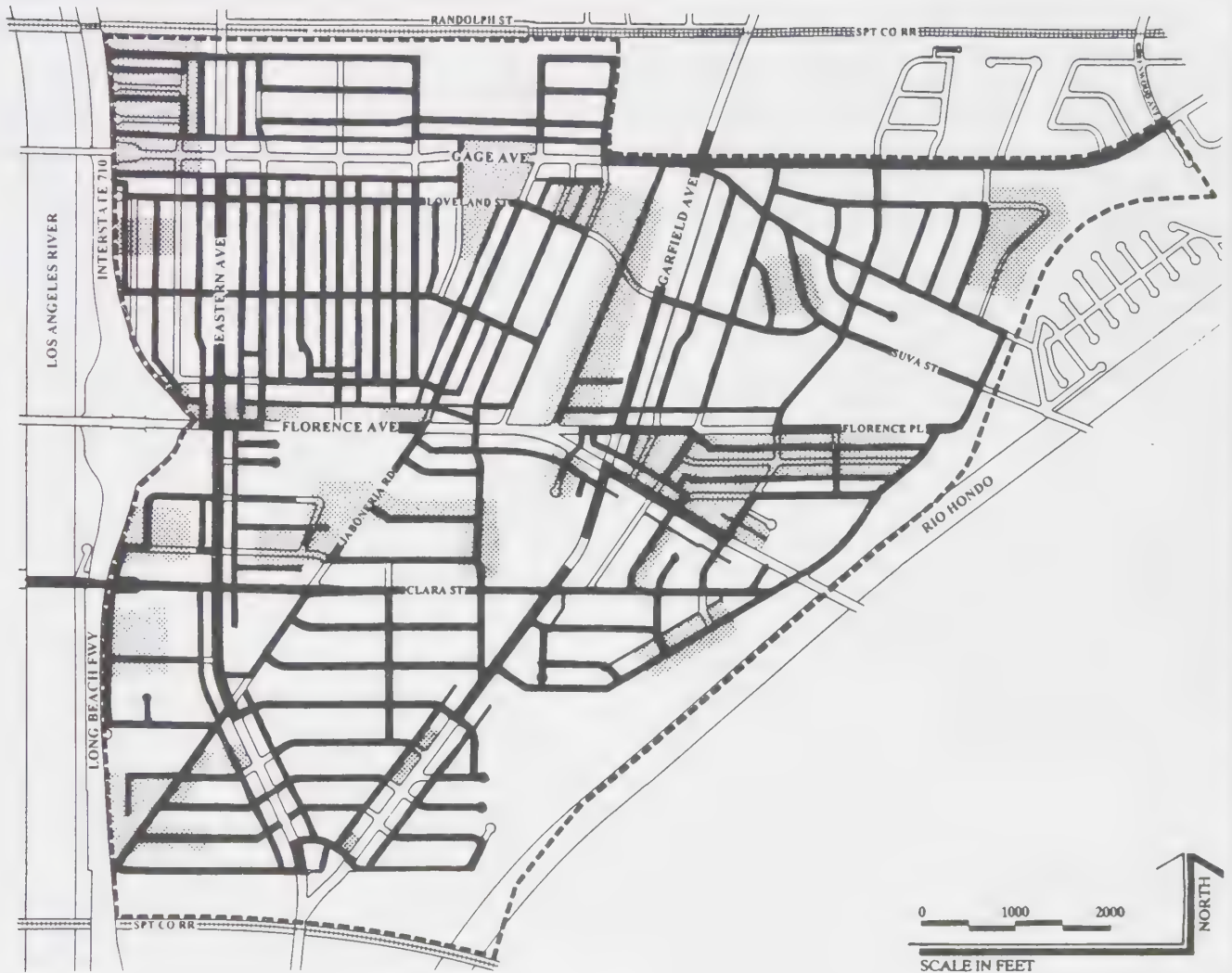
In 1988, a Water Master Plan Update was prepared to evaluate the adequacy of the City of Bell Gardens water supply system and to propose feasible long-term solutions. The Water Master Plan Update identified portions of the water system needing upgrading in order to meet the water supply demands anticipated due to development and redevelopment and then, recommended a capital improvement program for completing the proposed changes (Exhibit 1-10). The Plan proposes to utilize Community Development Block Grant and Redevelopment Agency funds as well as contributions from the two local purveyors to upgrade delivery facilities to provide an adequate service level for present and future land uses. The following information pertaining to water systems and services was derived from the 1988 Water Master Plan.



Although both of the local water companies have made efforts to address a number of system deficiencies, some deficiencies still remain in terms of the distribution and its reliability. The distribution system deficiencies consist of undersized mains, inaccessibility of mains, inadequate number and spacing of fire hydrants and inadequate storage and pumping capacity.

The water systems have insufficient reliability to meet peak domestic demands or fire demands during interruptions of electrical power.

According to the Water Master Plan, the total average day water demand (adjusted to reflect projected water usage) is 3,872 gallons per minute. The amount of equalizing water storage that is required to supply the maximum day demands over the average day demands is 33 percent of the volume of the average day demand, or 1.84





-  Existing Water Mains
-  Areas of Deficient Fire Protection

NOTE: See "City of Bell Gardens Water Master Plan Update - 1988" for more detailed information.  
 SOURCE: Willdan Associates

## EXHIBIT 1-10 WATER MASTER PLAN AND DEFICIENT FIRE FLOW





million gallons. If storage is also to be provided for the largest fire flow demand that could be expected (0.84 million gallons) then the total minimum storage that should be available within the City is 2.68 million gallons.

The Park Water Company currently has only one well operating within the City and can take a maximum of 7.5 cubic feet per second from the MWD Middle Feeder. In recent years, the Company has taken nearly 100 percent of its water from its MWD connection. Park Water Company currently does not have any storage facilities within its Bell Gardens water system.

Southern California Water Company currently has two ground level water storage reservoirs located at its well facility near Gage and Jaboneria. The combined capacity of the reservoirs is 690,000 gallons (0.69 MG) and booster pumps provide the lift from the reservoirs to the hydraulic grade line of the distribution system.

### **Drainage**

The City's existing storm drain system appears to have adequate capacity to meet the ultimate local needs. There are 8,000,000 in deficiencies that have been identified in the system (Exhibit 1-11). Bell Gardens is bounded by two major flood control improvements: the Los Angeles River channel to the west and the Rio Hondo channel to the east. Both are regional facilities capable of containing a 100-year frequency flood without hazard to the City. The City should, however, keep abreast of regional flood control activity due to proximity of the two major channels.

### **Sewers**

Bell Gardens has a fully developed sewer system which is maintained by the County and is included in Los Angeles County Sanitation

District No. 2. The existing facilities are shown in Exhibit 1-12.

The Los Angeles County Sanitation district is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the City's sewer system. The District operates a joint outfall system throughout the county. Sewage from Bell Gardens can be routed to a number of treatment facilities for liquid removal and treatment. Bell Gardens Public Works officials indicate that the City's sewer system adequately services the City's needs. In redevelopment areas, new trunk lines and lateral lines are installed on an "as needed" basis. Sewer system maps are on file at the City's Public Works office, at County Sanitation District offices, and with the County Department of Public Works.

### **Needs Assessment**

In a general sense, the City of Bell Gardens has an advantageous location in the Los Angeles Basin, in an area near the urban core with excellent access from the regional freeway system. From the perspective of residential development, this location places the City within a comfortable commute of Southern California's principal employment center, making Bell Gardens potentially a very desirable place to live.

The downtown commercial center has potentially excellent visibility from the Long Beach Freeway with a full bi-directional interchange at Florence and Eastern Avenues, and is near to the center of a growing market area for general retail activity. There is a healthy industrial base in the City, which can form a core for expansion and modernization. The City's socioeconomic characteristics are such that it qualifies for and can significantly benefit from most federal and state assistance programs. The City has a Redevelopment Agency with an excellent record of accomplishment, and has generated revenues to continue and to expand



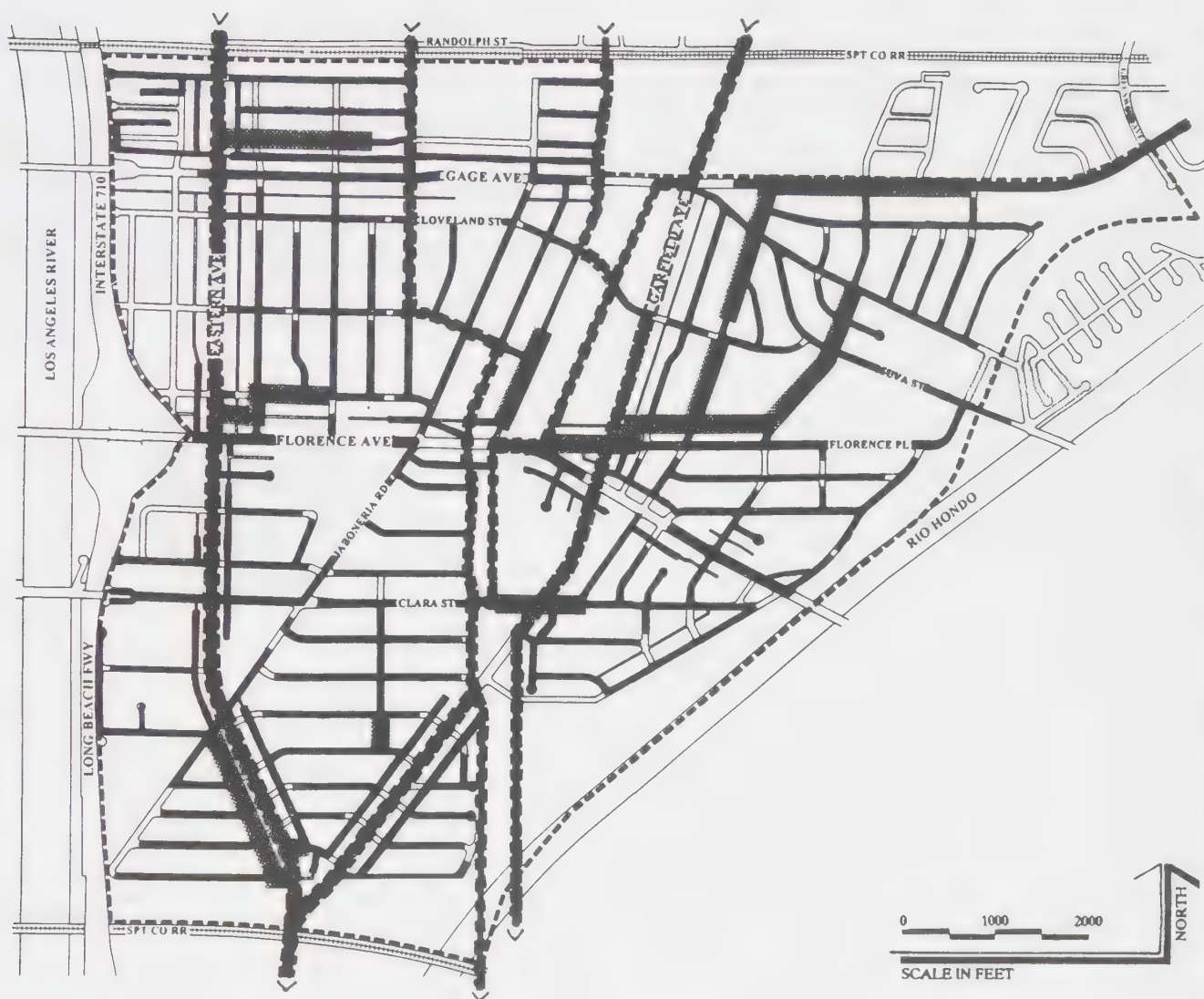






SOURCE: Willdan Associates

## EXHIBIT 1-11 MASTER PLAN OF DRAINAGE







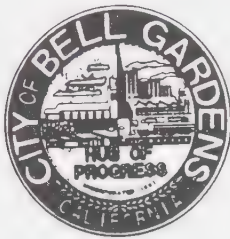
-  City of Bell Gardens Collector Sewer
-  L.A. County Sanitation District Trunk Sewers (May Run Parallel with City Collector Sewers)
-  Direction of Flow
-  Presently or Predicted Overloaded Sewers

NOTE: See "City of Bell Gardens Sewer Master Plan-1990" for more detailed information.  
 SOURCE: Willdan Associates

## EXHIBIT 1-12 SEWER MASTER PLAN



the redevelopment efforts, focused primarily on the downtown. However, the City continues to suffer from the effects of a haphazard land use planning history dating back to the 1930s and 1940s (prior to incorporation); and ineffective zoning which allowed for the location and development of uncontrolled relationships of unlike uses in virtually every neighborhood throughout the City. This mixed pattern is still highly visible today, where housing, in various stages of repair, shares blocks with commercial and industrial facilities along most of the major streets.





# City of Bell Gardens GENERAL PLAN

## Section 2 Housing Element





## SECTION 2: HOUSING ELEMENT

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### **INTRODUCTION TO THE HOUSING ELEMENT**

The Legislature requires each county and general law city in the state to develop a Housing Element as part of its General Plan. In compliance with this statutory mandate, the City of Bell Gardens adopted an initial Housing Element in 1973. In 1977, the Legislature revised the Housing Element guidelines requiring that the Housing Element of the General Plan be reviewed and updated at least every five years. Those requirements were fulfilled by the City by the adoption of a Housing Element in 1979 and an update in 1984.

In requiring the preparation of a Housing Element, Section 65302(c) of the Government Code indicates that the element shall consist of "standards and plans for the improvement of housing and for the provision of adequate sites for housing."

The Housing Element Guidelines, as contained in Title 25 of the California Administrative Code, requires that Housing Elements include the following:

- An assessment of housing needs and an inventory of resources and constraints relevant to the meeting of these needs.
- A statement of the community's goals, quantified objectives and policies relative to the maintenance, improvement and development of housing.
- A program which sets forth a five-year schedule of actions the City is undertaking or intends to undertake to implement the policies and achieve the goals and objectives of the Housing Element through the administration of land use and development controls, provisions of regulatory concessions, incentives and the

utilization of appropriate federal and state financing and subsidy programs when available.

Given this legislative background, the Housing Element update of the City of Bell Gardens, 1989, has been prepared in compliance with Section 65302(c) of the Government Code.

The Housing Element is divided into seven major sections. Section I is an introduction which includes a description of the City and its location in relation to other cities in Los Angeles County. Section II is a community profile which discusses both population and housing characteristics. Having documented existing conditions in the City, housing needs are assessed and identified in Section III. The housing assistance needs of special groups are identified in this section. A discussion of the physical, market and governmental constraints which contribute to the City's inability to affect housing issues and measures to remove said constraints follows in Section IV.

Section V of the element addresses the programs, policies and actions the City is undertaking to implement the goals of the Housing Element. Section VI discusses opportunities for conserving energy through housing design and construction. The appendices include mandated materials, documentation and correspondence.

### **Relationship to Other Elements of the General Plan**

The California Government Code states that "the General Plan and the parts and elements thereof shall comprise an integrated and internally consistent and compatible statement of policies." The various policies and programs recommended throughout the General Plan were taken into consideration during the preparation of this Housing Element.



A survey conducted in 1989 (Table 2-19) revealed that the number of vacant parcels available for residential development is severely limited. This fact, coupled with the near 100 percent build out of the residential areas, limits the opportunity for development of new housing or the recycling and densification of existing neighborhoods.

No circulation improvements are proposed as a result of this update. The existing transportation system provides an acceptable level-of-service to work centers, schools, shopping areas and other destinations for both existing and future residents.

The City through its redevelopment activities, as well as the Zoning Ordinance, requires more open space for residential developments, than in the past. Therefore, the amount of open space will be increased. Other factors such as noise and safety will not be affected as a result of this Housing Element.

#### Community Setting

Bell Gardens is 2.4 square miles in size and is located 13 miles southeast of the Los Angeles Civic Center. It borders the Cities of Commerce (north), Downey (east), South Gate (south) and the Bell and Cudahy (west). The Boundaries are delineated by man-made barriers: The Southern Pacific Railroad to the north; The Rio Hondo Flood Control Channel to the east; and The Los Angeles River and Interstate 710 to the west.

Incorporated as a general law city in 1961, the population was approximately 27,000. According to State Department of Finance (DOF) estimates (July, 1989), the current population of Bell Gardens is 38,300. This figure represents a 28 percent increase from 1961. The population density is extremely high with over 15,800 people per square mile. Today the City is almost completely built out with an estimated 0.5 percent

of the City's land vacant. Lacking vacant land, housing programs must focus on the preservation and improvement of the existing housing stock rather than new construction.

#### Use of Data

Primary sources of data used in the preparation of this report are the 1980 U.S. Census, the Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning Statistical Reports and the Annual State Department of Finance Estimates. Where available, this data was updated with more current information.

The 1988 Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) formulated by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) was utilized at the recommendation of the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). The RHNA is the only model prepared by SCAG which desegregates housing needs amongst all economic segments of the community and will be discussed later.

The City's 1987 Land Use Element, A Proposed Economic Development Strategy for the City of Bell Gardens and the 1984 Housing Element were also reviewed and pertinent statistical data used.

Finally, the data collected from various sources and utilized in the preparation of this document may reflect totals which are not identical. In most respects the totals are not as significant as the trends illustrated in the data collected. Where totals of population and housing counts were reported for the same period, they may have been adjusted to be consistent with the most valid source known.







## COMMUNITY PROFILE

### Population Characteristics

#### *Population Trend*

The City of Bell Gardens, when it incorporated as a general law city in 1961, had a population of 27,603. After rapid population growth between the mid-1930's and early 1960's, the rate of growth slowed slightly during the 70's as the ethnic composition of the community changed.

Between 1976 and 1980, the population of the City rose again with a total population in 1980 of 34,117. This was almost a 16 percent increase over the population in 1970.

From 1980 to 1985 the City's population increased by 6.5 percent. This was an increase of over 2,433 for a total population of 36,550 persons in 1985. According to 1989 DOF estimate, the City's current population is 38,300. This figure represents a 4.5 percent increase between 1985 and 1989.

#### *Population Projection*

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) in 1988 projected a population of 36,748 for the City by the year 2010. However, more recent data obtained from DOF indicates that the population of the City is substantially higher than SCAG'S population forecast. In fact, the City has already exceeded SCAG'S 2010 projection of 36,748 with a population of 38,300 in July 1989. As shown in Table 2-1, since 1980, the population growth in Bell Gardens has been at an average rate of 1.3 percent annually.

Currently SCAG is in the process of updating their population forecast for small cities but the new figures will not be available until late in 1990. Therefore, SCAG has recommended the use of their preliminary baseline projection. This population projection shows a base population of 37,578 in 1987 with a projected decline in population to 37,092 by the year 2010.

An economic development strategy study prepared for the City in 1986 indicates that an unusually high percentage of household income is spent in the City which leads one to believe that there are more residents that are statistically visible who are spending more money in Bell Gardens for taxable consumer goods.

In addition, the Montebello Unified School District officials report a steady growth of pupils in the public schools in Bell Gardens. The most visible growth has occurred in the intermediate schools. These factors are indicative of more families residing in the City that are accounted for in the statistics.



**TABLE 2-1  
POPULATION TREND, 1980-1989**

Year	Population	Percent of Change
1980	34,114	---
1981	34,750	1.8
1982	35,300	1.6
1983	35,600	0.7
1984	36,300	0.9
1985	36,550	0.7
1986	37,150	1.2
1987	37,600	1.9
1988	38,300	2.0
1989	38,300	---

Sources: State Department of Finance; 1980, U.S. Census.

### *Racial and Ethnic Composition*

The racial and ethnic composition of the City shifted dramatically between 1970 and 1980. The white (non-Hispanic) population dropped 41.8 percent and is projected to continue to drop

in the future. As evidenced in Table 2-2, the largest percentage increase has been in the City's Hispanic population.

**TABLE 2-2  
RACE AND ETHNICITY**

Race	1970	1980	1990
White (non-Hispanic)	74.2%	32.3%	N/A
Hispanic	21.7%	64.3%	85.8%
Black	0.1%	0.5%	2.1%
Other	4.0%	2.9%	N/A

Sources: Urban Decision System; 1980, U.S. Census.

### *Age*

Information obtained from the 1986 Test Census of Central Los Angeles County indicates that approximately 28,700 persons or 77 percent of the City's 1986 population was of Hispanic origin. It is expected that the City will continue to be an arrival destination for future Hispanic population.

The distribution of population by age group between 1970 and 1980 remained relatively stable. This trend is expected to continue through the 1990's.

Compared to Los Angeles County, Bell Gardens continues to maintain a large percent of younger residents. As seen in Table 2-3, in 1970 and 1980, over 77 percent of the City's population



*Section 2: Housing Element (continued)*

was below the age of 44. Further, the 55-66 age group has decreased from 7.1 percent to 5.3 percent of the total population. This predominance of younger population is predicted to continue into the 1990's. The median age in 1980 was 22 years of age as compared to Los

Angeles County's median age of 29.8 years (Table 2-4). According to several data sources, the median age in the City fell to 20.7 years in 1990 and increased to 32.1 for Los Angeles County.

**TABLE 2-3  
AGE DISTRIBUTION 1970-1980**

Age (years)	1970		1980		1990*
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Percent
0-13	9,987	34.0	11,944	35.0	40.0
14-20	3,252	11.1	4,364	12.8	10.4
21-34	6,742	23.0	8,737	25.6	23.1
35-44	2,790	9.5	3,178	9.3	12.4
45-54	2,541	8.7	2,166	6.3	5.3
55-64	2,107	7.2	1,814	5.3	3.6
65+	1,889	6.4	1,914	5.6	5.3
Totals	29,308	100.0	34,117	100.0	100.0
Median Age	23.5		22.1		100.0

\* Indicates projected percentage

Sources: Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning; Economic Research Associates; 1980, U.S. Census.

**TABLE 2-4  
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES AGE DISTRIBUTION 1970-1990**

Age (years)	1970		1980		1990	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
0-13	1,756,874	25.0	1,532,366	20.5	1,701,409	20.3
14-20	846,178	12.1	917,824	12.3	790,752	9.4
21-34	1,436,009	20.4	1,939,877	26.0	2,165,094	25.8
35-44	843,864	12.0	886,965	11.9	1,336,562	15.9
45-54	861,038	12.2	790,823	10.2	804,839	9.6
55-64	635,713	9.0	696,643	9.3	685,159	8.2
65+	652,399	9.3	743,005	9.9	904,761	10.8
Totals	7,032,075	100.0	7,507,503	100.0	8,388,576	100.0
Median Age	29.6		29.8		32.1	

\* Indicates projected percentage

Sources: Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning; Economic Research Associates; 1980, U.S. Census.

**CITY OF BELL GARDENS GENERAL PLAN**

July 27, 1995





### Household Size

According to the Bureau of the Census, all of the persons who occupy a housing unit, whether or not they are related, are considered to be a "household". In 1985 and 1988, there were 3.97 persons per household in the City of Bell Gardens. In 1989, the average number of persons per household has increased to 3.99 (Table 2-5).

Table 2-6 shows that of the 9,078 households in 1970, 18 percent were one person, 25 percent were two persons, 35 percent were three to four persons and 22 percent were five persons or more. The 1980 household size figures for the City show an increase in the number of households with three or more persons living in a dwelling unit. This is an indication of relatively overcrowded conditions in the City.

**TABLE 2-5  
HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS 1985-1989**

Year	Household	Group Quarters	Average Number Per Household
1985	9,479	495	3.97
1988	9,445	474	3.97
1989	9,488	464	3.97

Source: Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning, estimates

**TABLE 2-6  
HOUSEHOLD SIZE 1970-1990**

Year	1 Person		2 People		3-4 People		5 or More	
1970	1,659	18.0%	2,271	25.0%	3,177	3,177	1,971	22.0%
1980	1,426	15.3%	1,840	19.8%	3,242	3,242	2,805	30.1%
1990	2,381	21.4%	2,776	25.0%	4,049	4,049	1,916	17.2%

\* These figures appear to be extremely low. It is believed that five or more person households will be a continuing trend in the City  
Sources: Urban Decision Systems, Inc.; U.S. Census; Economic Research Associates.

### Income Characteristics

During the ten year period between 1970 and 1980, there was a significant change in the distribution of income levels within the City.

Average family income in Bell Gardens has increased from \$8,333 to \$12,137, an increase of 45.6 percent. Table 2-7 reports the number of families by income groups for 1980.



**TABLE 2-7**  
**1980 INCOME DISTRIBUTION**

Income Dollars	Number of Families	Percent
Less than 5,000	1,604	17.2
5,000 - 9,999	2,173	23.3
10,000 - 14,999	2,068	22.2
15,000 - 19,999	1,533	16.5
20,000 - 24,999	872	9.4
25,000 - 29,999	476	5.1
30,000 - 34,999	275	3.0
35,000 - 39,000	136	1.5
40,000 - 44,999	119	1.3
More than 50,000	59	0.7

Source: U.S. Census, 1980.

Table 2-8 shows that the City's median and per capita income historically have been significantly lower than that for Los Angeles County as a whole. A study conducted by a Chicago professor ranks the City of Bell Gardens as the third poorest City in the nation with a 1988 per capita income of \$5,337.

■ This per capita figure is consistent with the 1980 and 1985 estimates shown in Table 2-8.

■ Los Angeles Times, June 6, 1989, David Rocks By-line

**TABLE 2-8**  
**HOUSEHOLD INCOME**

Income Median Per Capita					
Bell Gardens			L.A. County		
1980	1985	1988	1980	1985	1988
12,137	16,257	19,518	17,563	23,905	29,200
3,796	4,725	5,337	8,303	11,842	15,583

Sources: 1980 U.S. Census; Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning; Los Angeles County Community Development Commission.

### ***Employment and Labor Force***

As shown in Table 2-9, a large number of Bell Garden's population is employed in the construction and manufacturing industries which accounts for more than 55% of the working

(employed) population. According to the 1980 Census, a smaller percentage of the labor force in the City was employed in professional and technical positions, than in the County as a whole. Table 2-10 and Figure 3 show the types of employment prevalent in the City.





Unemployment presents a major problem in the City of Bell Gardens. Statistical information in 1985 indicates a 15 percent unemployment rate

as compared to 9.8 percent in 1980. These figures have serious implications on deteriorating housing conditions, overcrowding and the ability of residents to obtain home improvement loans.

**TABLE 2-9  
EMPLOYMENT DISTRIBUTION BY INDUSTRY**

Industry	Number of People	Percent Employed
Agriculture	137	1.3
Construction/Manufacture	5,775	55.6
Transportation/Communication	614	5.9
Wholesale/Retail Estate	1,842	17.7
Finance/Real Estate	198	1.9
Business/Repair	608	5.9
Professional Services	1,109	10.7
Public Administration	99	1.0
Total	10,382	100.0

Source: 1980 U.S. Census

**TABLE 2-10  
JOB CATEGORIES**

Job Type	Labor Force	
	Bell Gardens	L.A. County
Technical/Professional	6.3	27.7
Sales & Service	14.6	21.9
Administrative Support	12.3	19.7
Transportation/Handling	17.2	7.6
Farming; Fishing; Forestry	1.1	1.1
Production/Repair Services	48.5	22.0
Total	100.0	100.0

Source: U.S. Census, 1980.

### Housing Characteristics

### Housing Construction Trends

As compared to other Southern California cities, construction activity during the 1970's has been relatively modest in Bell Gardens. The City

averaged approximately 80 new dwelling units per year of which 83 percent were multi-family units (two or more units). Since 1985, as vacant land for new construction became less available, new construction experienced a slump. Between 1985 and 1989, building permits were issued for 58 single-family dwellings and 303 for multi-family



units for a total of 361 Dwellings. This averages to 72 new dwelling units per year (Table 2-11).

During the same time 293 housing demolition permits were issued for a total gain of 68 housing units.

TABLE 2-11  
CONSTRUCTION/DEMOLITION OF HOUSING UNITS

Year	Single-Family Units	Multi-Family Units	Total Units	Demolished
1985	+ 6	+43	49	- 8
1986	+19	+83	104	- 56
1987	+12	+64	76	-103
1988	+13	+84	97	-112
June 1989	+ 8	+27	35	- 14

Source: Building Department, City of Bell Gardens.

### Tenure

According to the 1980 Census there were 9,764 housing units in the City of Bell Gardens. Of those, 7,216 units were renter occupied, 2,310 were owner occupied and 233 were vacant with five "seasonally" occupied units. 73 percent were considered single-family; 3.4 percent were two-units; 5.5 percent were three to four units and 18 percent were five or more units. Of these units 71.8 percent were rentals and 28.2 percent were owner occupied. This trend has continued as more multi-family than single family units were constructed since 1980. Currently it is estimated that 77 percent of all units are renter occupied.

### Size and Overcrowding

The size of residential units (number of bedrooms) is an important factor which indicates how adequately the housing stock accommodates the population. A family is not considered

overcrowded unless there is more than one person per room living in the same unit. According to the 1980 Census, 47.4 percent of all households had four or more persons, while only 16.6 percent of the units in the City had three or more bedrooms to accommodate such households (Table 2-12 and 2-13). This indicates a relatively high percentage of overcrowded conditions. In addition, to accommodate large families, some residents have constructed second units and illegal units or converted garages into living quarters. This practice increased overcrowding within an already densely-developed and dilapidated environment. Current data pertaining to overcrowding is not available, however, the 1980 Census reported that 21.3 percent of occupied units built prior to 1940 and 33.6 percent of occupied units built after 1940 were overcrowded. Additional data obtained from the City building department reveals a gradual increase in construction of units with three or more bedrooms (Table 2-14).



**TABLE 2-12  
NUMBER OF BEDROOMS BY UNIT - 1980**

Number of Bedrooms	Number of Units	Percent
0	649	6.6
1	3,028	31.0
2	4,476	45.9
3	1,342	13.9
4	232	2.4
5+	32	0.3

Source: 1980 U.S. Census.

**TABLE 2-13  
SIZE OF HOUSEHOLDS - 1980**

Persons per Household	Number of Households	Percent
1	443	15.3
2	1,905	20.3
3	1,641	17.0
4	1,212	17.4
5	1,604	12.9
6+		17.1

Source: 1980 U.S. Census.

**TABLE 2-14  
NUMBER OF RESIDENTIAL UNITS CONSTRUCTED 1985 - JUNE 1989**

Year	1-2 Bedrooms	3 or More Bedrooms
1985	18	30
1986	41	63
1987	30	45
1988	39	58
1989 (June)	22	13

Source: Building Department, City of Bell Gardens.

### *Age of Housing*

The age of the housing stock is a major contributor to the overall housing conditions in the City. U.S. census data for 1980 indicates that almost 68 percent of the existing units were

constructed before 1970 (Table 2-15). According to building permit activity in Bell Gardens it is estimated that approximately five percent of the City's units were constructed between 1980 and 1989.





TABLE 2-15  
AGE OF THE HOUSING STOCK

Year Structure Was Built	Number	Percent
1970 - 1980	654	6.7
1960 - 1969	2,497	25.6
1950 - 1959	2,954	30.3
Prior to 1949	3,654	37.4
Total	9,759	100.0

Source: U.S. Census, 1980.

### Vacancy Rate

In the housing market a low vacancy rate drives the cost of housing upward to the disadvantage of a prospective buyer or renter. A vacancy rate of five percent for rental and three percent for owner-occupied units is desirable to obtain a healthy housing market.

In 1980 there were 233 vacant units in the City indicating a citywide vacancy rate of 2.3 percent which is well below the desirable rate of 3-5 percent.

The Los Angeles County Regional Planning Commission reports a vacancy rate of 3.2 percent for the City of Bell Gardens during 1988. Such a low vacancy rate creates a hardship on lower income persons making it difficult to obtain affordable housing.

### Cost and Affordability

During the past decade, the City enjoyed an increase in property values. According to a 1986 breakdown of sales data and real estate market activity, the average sale price of a single-family dwelling in 1985 was approximately \$83,663, ranging from \$60,000 to \$142,000. The average price per square foot ranged from \$79 to \$92.

The same data also indicated that the average sale price of a multiple-family dwelling was approximately \$49,330 per unit, and ranged from \$26,670 to \$72,000 per unit. The current average sale price of a single-family dwelling is \$120,000.

The 1980 U.S. Census reported that in 1979, over 4,080 households in Bell Gardens paid more than 25 percent of their income for housing. Of those, 3,519 (86 Percent) households were renters.

According to the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), a households affordability for housing units is based on the percentage of income that is spent on the unit.

■ 1980 U.S. Census, Economic Research Associates, 1986, Southwest Board of Realtors, 1989, Real Property Appraiser for the City of Bell Gardens Redevelopment Agency.

A very low income household should not pay more than 25 percent of its gross monthly income for housing and a low income household should not pay more than 30 percent. HUD, state and local agencies consider those households that pay more than 25-30 percent of their incomes for housing as households in need of assistance. Assuming that the current estimate of the median sales price of a single-family home in the City is



\$120,000, a family should earn an annual income of approximately \$33,000, in order to be able to purchase such a home. Realistically, however, a family earning less than \$33,000 should be capable of owning a house in Bell Gardens. With down-payments and creative financing which currently exist in the marketplace, it is possible to finance a purchase with less than \$33,000 annual income.

### ***Existing Housing Conditions***

A large number of the City's housing units show signs of deterioration. There are areas of the City that fail to be effectively rejuvenated due to circumstances such as absentee ownership. In addition, the age of housing stock is a major contributor to overall housing conditions in the City. According to the 1980 Census, 21.3 percent of occupied units were built before 1940 and 33 percent of the existing units were constructed before 1960.

A local housing conditions survey was conducted in August of 1989. To remain consistent in the judging of housing conditions, the following four broad categories defined in the 1984 housing condition survey were used:

- 1. Good** - No major deficiencies noted. A few minor defects such as slightly peeling or cracked paint, small cracks in stucco, and missing or broken window screens may exist.
- 2. Fair** - Evidence of a lack of regular maintenance. Corrections needed may include the replacement of roofing and painting, door frames and broken windows.
- 3. Poor** - Evidence that the structure may not be providing adequate shelter and may be endangering the health and safety of the occupants. The deterioration may extend to the actual framing of the structure. Other symptoms

include deteriorated porch, cracks, holes or other evidence of rotted, loose or missing materials related to foundations, roofs or chimneys.

- 4. Bad** - The cost of effectiveness of repairing the structure may not be reasonable. Symptoms may include substantial sagging of roofs, evidence of widespread structural deterioration, extensive fire damage and effects of aging in combination with the above.

According to the survey 40 percent of the housing units in the City are in good condition. More than 35 percent of the units are in fair condition, 20 percent are in poor condition and five percent are in bad condition.

The majority of the housing comprising the fair and poor category can be upgraded by a rehabilitation program. The City can accomplish this through the use of CDBG and Redevelopment Agency funds. This aspect is further discussed in Section V. The bad condition housing does not warrant the expenditure of rehabilitation funds as the improvement expense is not cost effective when compared to replacement cost. The 75 percent of the housing in the fair and good condition categories do provide an adequate housing base to support any future growth of the City.







## **HOUSING NEEDS**

### **SCAG - Housing Needs Assessment**

Pursuant to the Housing Element Law, Article 10.6 of the Government Code, the Housing Element shall identify and make adequate provisions for the existing and projected housing needs of all economic segments of the community. These existing and projected housing needs must include the locality's share of the regional housing need. The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), based upon data provided by the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) relative to the statewide need for housing, determines the existing and projected housing need for its region and each city therein. In 1988, SCAG presented these estimates in a document entitled Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA). This portion of the Housing Element reviews SCAG's projections for the City, relative to housing needs.

### ***Fair Share Allocation***

The 1988 RHNA identifies housing needs by various income groups, based upon the County's median household income. As defined by the State HCD, households, whose incomes are equal or less than the 50 percent of the County's median household income are considered to be very-low income. Low income households are those who have annual income between 50 percent to 80 percent of the County's median household income. Moderate income households are families earning 80 percent or more of the County's median. According to the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), any household that pays more than 30 percent of its gross monthly income for housing is considered to be eligible for housing assistance.

The 1988 SCAG's Regional Housing Needs Assessment indicates that 3,078 (33 percent) City

of Bell Gardens' households pay 30 percent or more of their gross income for housing. Of these households 824 (26.7 percent) households are in the low income category, and 2,254 (73 percent) are very low income households. 320 (10.4 percent) are owner occupied households and 2,758 (89.6 percent) are renters. These 3,078 households are in need of housing assistance. The City is implementing several housing programs, described in Section V of this document, whose purpose is to alleviate this situation.

According to RHNA, future housing needs are defined as the number of units each city must add to accommodate its fair share of expected regional growth. Based on SCAG's information, the future needs for the City for the next five years (1989-1994) is 152 units.\* This translates into a minimum of 30 units per year. Over the past five years 361 units were constructed within the City or 72 per year. It is envisioned that the aforementioned housing needs will be accommodated on the few available vacant sites, and through recycling of existing dilapidated units.

Although the physical means exist in the City to meet projected housing needs, this does not guarantee that they will be constructed. Financial and other constraints, which are discussed in Section IV, may impede housing development. It should be pointed out, however, that private redevelopment and recycling of properties as well as City's construction of replacement housing have already occurred. It is believed that this trend will continue in the future and that new affordable units will be added. The City should also attempt to address an appropriate distribution of future units by income ranges. Tables 2-16 and 2-17 summarize SCAG's estimates for existing and future housing needs by income category for the City.



■ This includes a "gap" period between 1988-1989; a period between the time SCAG first

developed this model and when the figures were first published for use.

**TABLE 2-16  
EXISTING HOUSING NEEDS - OVERPAYMENT FOR HOUSING**

<b>Total Households</b>		9,210	
<b>Low Income Households</b>		5,452 (39%)	
<b>Overpayment (low income)</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Renter</b>
Very Low	2,254	199	2,055
Low	824	122	703

Source: 1988 RHNA

**TABLE 2-17  
FUTURE HOUSING NEEDS**

<b>Total</b>		<b>Very Low</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>High</b>
1994 Total Households	9,234	21	30	37	41
5 Years Growth in Households	18				
Future Housing Needs	128				
Current Needs	3,078	39.5%		60.0%	
Projected Needs	128				

Source: 1988 RHNA

Excludes the need occurred between 1988-1989. Of the households needing assistance 40% (1282) are lower income. The remaining 1924 are of moderate to higher income. In this element, the City is addressing the low income household needs, since it is assumed that average and above average income households will be primarily served through the private market. In an effort to create a greater balance between renter and owner occupied dwelling units,

emphasis in new construction should be placed on home ownership opportunities.

### *Special Groups Needs*

Within the housing needs estimates presented above, there are segments of the population that experience special housing needs. These groups include the homeless, the elderly, the



handicapped, female headed households, large families, minority groups, and farm workers.

### *Homeless Population*

Over the past few years, the homeless population has been increasing in the region. The homeless in California are estimated to number as many as 100,000. According to a regional study of the 50,000 homeless in the County, less than 60 percent are accommodated by existing social service facilities and programs. No independent studies have been undertaken to determine the extent of homelessness in the City. However, according to the Human Service Association (HSA), in 1989, about 75 homeless persons received services and assistance. Of these, 14 were female, 45 were male, eight were homeless families and eight were homeless male senior citizens. In addition, approximately eight homeless families and eight homeless male senior citizens were assisted in the City through HSA.

Although the City has relatively small numbers of homeless families and individuals, HSA claims that the City has experienced a 6-8 percent per year increase in the number of the homeless population over the last five years. HSA assists homeless persons by providing food,

clothing and referring the homeless to existing agencies in the City of Bell, Commerce and Downey. The Salvation Army in the City of Bell operates a homeless shelter and provides basic services and referral. In addition, local churches provide food and referral to other agencies when requested by the homeless.

While the City is not adequately staffed to administer social service programs for the homeless, it will cooperate and work with other shelter and social service providers to develop programs and shelters. The City considers all multi-family and commercially zoned property potentially suitable for emergency or transitional shelters. Appendix D lists resources for funding shelters for the homeless.

### *Elderly Households*

Limited incomes of many of the senior citizens pose a special problem with regards to housing affordability and accessibility for the elderly.

Based on the 1980 Census, there were 1,914 households in the City 65 years of age and older. Of these households 810 were male and 1,104 were female. There are various private facilities and retirement homes in the City which offer special services and care for the elderly and handicapped residents, as indicated in Table 2-18

**TABLE 2-18  
PRIVATE HOME CARE FACILITIES FOR THE ELDERLY AND HANDICAPPED**

Facilities	Number of Residents
Del Rio Convalescent Center (handicapped and mentally disabled)	99
Bell Gardens Convalescent Home	135
Bell Gardens Manor (mentally disabled)	141





**TABLE 2-18  
PRIVATE HOME CARE FACILITIES FOR THE ELDERLY AND HANDICAPPED**

Facilities	Number of Residents
Angel Bell Guest Home	16
Ann Arms Guest Home	12
Garden Villa Boarding Home	15

There are other small family care centers within the City which provide care and shelter for the elderly.

### ***Handicapped Households***

Handicap persons also experience special housing needs. They may require special ramps for accessibility, lower counters and other housing accommodations to meet their needs. Title 24, Part II of the California Administrative Code requires most multi-family rental units to be equipped with handicapped adaptable amenities. The 1980 Census reported 1 percent of the City's population was handicapped. There are two (2) major establishments in the City of for the mentally and physically handicapped. At the present time, the Del Rio Sanitarium and Bell Gardens Manor offer special services for 99 and 141 mentally and physically handicapped residents respectively.

### ***Female-Headed Households***

Female-headed households often have limited income and therefore are faced with difficulty in finding adequate and affordable housing. Based on the 1980 Census, female-headed households account for 15.9 percent of all households in the City.

### ***Large Families***

Large families households commonly experience overcrowding. A large family is defined as five or more persons. Many of the units in the City are small compared to the number of people living in them. According to the 1980 Census, there were 2,816 households with five or more persons making up 30 percent of all households. To accommodate large families, some residents in the City have constructed rooms and/or second units. Many of them have been constructed without the appropriate City approval or building permit. Such "not to code" construction adds to the dilapidated appearance of several of the neighborhoods within an already densely developed area.

### ***Minority Households***

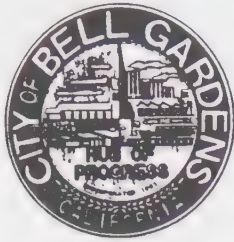
As indicated previously, 77 percent of the City's 1986 population was of Hispanic origin. According to the 1980 Census, 64.3 percent of the population was Hispanic while 3.3 percent were Black, Asian and other. The City has been an arrival destination for many Hispanic families and this trend is expected to continue.

### ***Farmworkers***

According to the State Employment Development Department, no farmworkers reside in Bell Gardens. In addition, the U.S. Census classifies the population as 100 percent urban. The 1988



SCAG's RHNA report does not include statistic on farmworkers.



## CONSTRAINTS

There are various interrelated factors, both public and private, which restrict housing opportunities and influence the production and rehabilitation of housing. Many of these factors, particularly in the private and market sectors, are beyond the control of local governments. However, certain other factors can be influenced by strong local housing program efforts. The extent of which these factors affect the supply and affordability of housing in the City is discussed below:

### Physical Constraints

#### *Residential Land Unavailability*

A major constraint to the development of housing within the City of Bell Gardens is the

unavailability of developable vacant land. At present only a few vacant residential parcels exist within the City limits. Figure 4 shows the approximate location of these parcels. New development will continue to be primarily of an in-fill and replacement nature within established neighborhoods. In the 1984 Housing Element it was reported that approximately 120 units could be built on then vacant parcels in the City. The City's building permit records indicate that 361 building permits were issued for residential construction between 1984 and July, 1989. This is indicative of the in-fill nature of construction of underutilized parcels. The few existing vacant parcels can accommodate, at most 53 rental units or 67 condominium units. Table 2-19 summarizes the potential development capacity of the vacant sites in Bell Gardens. The maximum capacity of development shown in Table 2-19 above does not take into account the number of units which could result from the recycling of existing underutilized parcels nor does it include several vacant parcels which have received approval for residential development.

TABLE 2-19  
VACANT LAND

Tact	Block Number	Size (sq. ft.)	Maximum Rentals/Condominiums
5341	605	75,000	42/53
5341	602	13,050	5/6
5342	303	11,900	4/5
5340	507	6,820	2/3





### ***Infrastructure Constraints***

The water distribution system in the City is inadequate to meet peak domestic demands or fire demands in periods of emergency. The undersized mains in many areas of the City are a major constraint to development of housing. Fire flows are too low to meet current and future development. It is too expensive for an individual developer of one or two lots serviced by the system to upgrade the entire system. Two privately owned utility companies provide water service to the City. Park Water Company serves approximately 34 percent of the City and Southern California Water Company serves 66 percent. Both companies have made conscious efforts to improve the service. However, deficiencies still exist. Recognizing this deficiency and constraint on development, the City has adopted a Water Master Plan. This plan sets forth a series of recommendations to be implemented over an eighteen-year period. The City utilizes Community Development Block Grant Funds, as well as monies from the local water companies, to upgrade water delivery facilities for present and future land use.

### ***Environmental Constraints***

#### ***Flood Hazard***

As of November 1985 the entire City has been identified by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as being located in zone C, areas of minimal flooding. Zone C is outside the 500-year flood boundary. Therefore, flood hazard is not a constraint to development in the City.

#### ***Noise and Odor***

Noise and odors generated by freeways and industrial uses result in irritation and possible health hazards to nearby residents. State noise

guidelines recommend that residences be located in areas where the ambient noise levels are not greater than 65 decibels. Many homes in the City are exposed to levels greater than this. The walls along the Freeway near the residential neighborhoods, greatly reduce the traffic noise, however they do not eliminate it entirely. Other residential areas exposed to noise are located along the heavily traveled roadways such as Eastern Avenue, Florence Avenue, Garfield Avenue and Gage Street. Much of the traffic on these and other roads include heavy trucks travelling to the industrial parts of the City as well as to and from neighboring cities.

### ***Soils Contamination***

Transitional land uses may involve soil contamination and one such parcel involves the former Watkins Trucking Terminal which is partially within the limits of Bell Gardens and the City of Commerce. The City had entertained a proposal for development of senior housing but that project has been deferred until the soils conditions can be stabilized for residential development.

### ***Market Constraints***

#### ***Production Costs and Financing***

Production cost factors such as land acquisition and improvement, construction material and labor, financing, overhead and fees are market constraints which impact the affordability of housing. The cost of housing in Bell Gardens has increased in the last few years as land values, construction costs and finance charges continue to increase. The diminishing supply of land available for residential construction has driven land and housing costs upward. The City has no control over the market fluctuations that affect housing costs.



An inventory of local lending institutions revealed that loans are available in the area to qualified clients. Creative financing is also available and encouraged by the banks, especially for the first time buyer or developer. The interest rates, points and other costs are very similar to those of lending institutions from surrounding cities.

### ***Other Market Constraints***

Residential vacancy rates and the location of the City within the Los Angeles basin are two market constraints which affect the affordability of housing. As Los Angeles development areas continue to expand, Bell Gardens is becoming an increasingly convenient area in which to live.

Housing prices will continue to rise due to this demand. As previously mentioned, 3.2 percent of the housing stock within the City is vacant. This translates to the demand for housing in the region exceeding the available supply which inflates both the rental and ownership housing prices.

Inflation in the cost of goods and especially housing means that many families find themselves unable to afford a suitable housing. The lack of sufficient income causes more working people to share the cost of a home. As a result, overcrowding is common and the housing choice of many households is severely restricted. This situation is further aggravated in

periods of high unemployment. Racial and economic discrimination also has a direct affect on housing opportunity and results in the concentration of minority and lower income households. Redlining practices have not been observed as the city's housing market is not characterized by wide disparities in prices. The Long Beach Fair Housing Foundation monitors redlining practices.

### ***Governmental Constraints***

Public constraints, such as land use and development controls, site improvement fees and development permits affect the supply, distribution and cost of housing. Although unpopular, these controls are necessary to protect the community's health, safety and welfare.

### ***Land Use Controls***

The General Plan and Zoning Ordinance provide the basis for guiding development in the City. The policies of these documents affect the location, type and density of housing and other land uses. Zoning ordinance regulations such as building height (35 to 45 feet), lot coverage (45 percent) and parking (two per dwelling unit) are necessary to maintain public safety and community aesthetics. The 1987 Land Use Element sets density limitations which control the number of units on a given site. Table 2-20 shows the land use and allowed density:

TABLE 2-20 LAND USE AND DENSITY			
Land Use Category	Allowed Density	Allocated Acreage	Percent of Total City Acreage
Very Low Density	8.7 units/acre	127.04	8.2
Low Density	15 units/acre	497.73	32.4
Medium Density	30 units/acre	219.73	14.3



**TABLE 2-20  
LAND USE AND DENSITY**

Land Use Category	Allowed Density	Allocated Acreage	Percent of Total City Acreage
Total Residential Acreage		844.5	55.0

These densities are not very restrictive and are comparable to neighboring communities.

Land use controls should be periodically reevaluated and updated to respond to changing community needs. The City of Bell Gardens' Land Use Element was revised in 1987 to better reflect the community's changing needs and development patterns.

The City's residential development standards are not overly or unreasonably restrictive. The density, setbacks and other standards regulating residential development within the City are less restrictive than those of other cities and do not inhibit the development of housing.

### ***Building Codes***

Building codes can influence the cost of housing. The City has adopted the State Uniform Building Code which establishes minimum construction standards. These are the minimum standards set by state law. The California Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission has developed guidelines used by building code enforcement officials to implement energy conservation regulations established by the California Energy Commission. Serving as a mitigation tool to help reduce electricity and natural gas consumption, they add to the cost of housing.

### ***Processing Fees***

The development fees for processing development cases in Bell Gardens are among the lowest in

surrounding communities. The City does not derive full compensation for staff hours through filing fees. This "carry" project policy where fees do not reflect the actual costs of performing services results in the reduction of front-end expense to developers. Table 2-22 contains the City's current processing fees.

State law authorizes school districts to collect impact fees for all new residential, commercial and industrial construction. For new residential construction and addition to an existing residence where the value of the increased space is \$20,000 or more, the fee is \$1.56 per square foot of new construction. A 501 square-foot addition to a house, results in a school district impact fee of \$781. This fee will influence the construction, especially in a case of a low-income family wishing to add on to their house to relieve overcrowded conditions. (Additions of 500 sq. ft. or less is not subject to this fee.)

The City does not retain an in-house engineering department. Building inspection services such as plan check and permit issuance are contracted for through an engineering firm. Fees charged the developer for these services are in line with those currently assessed by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works - Engineering Department and are sufficient to reimburse the City for its contractual expenses.

### ***Permit Processing***

The processing time needed to obtain development permits and required approval is a contributor to





the high cost of housing. This is not the case in the City of Bell Gardens. The City's policy is to discourage any backlog of cases. City staff processes cases as soon as legally feasible as unnecessary delays add to the cost of construction by increasing land holding costs, interest payments and inflation.

In 1978 the State of California passed a bill through the Assembly (AB884) which helped to reduce government delays by limiting processing time and requiring agencies to specify (list) the information required to complete an acceptable application. The City of Bell Gardens has fully implemented the provisions of AB884. In addition, the City has established a Site Plan Review Committee which meets every other week and reviews most building and construction plans. This committee consists of representatives from the Planning, Public Works, Engineering, Fire Departments and Redevelopment Agency. The advantage of such a committee is that questions and/or problems which might surface at the Planning Commission meeting can be addressed prior to the meeting. Other cases which do not require approval by the Planning Commission may be approved by the Review Committee. Such procedures speed up the approval process by several weeks. The Plan Check Review for new construction averages four to six weeks which is considerably less than most surrounding cities. Other pertinent reviews and permits are issued for engineering, drainage, grading, public works, electrical and other aspects of new developments.

### ***Local Services and Facilities***

The majority of the necessary infrastructure in Bell Gardens, such as streets, lighting, sewer, and water are existing. However, due to the age of many of those improvements, they are substandard and in need of upgrading. The developers are responsible for the upgrading of the improvements, which add to the cost of

construction. Information provided by City staff and the utility companies servicing the City indicates that the present infrastructure, except possibly for the water facilities which are inadequate, is not considered to be an obstacle to the construction of additional housing units.

### ***State and Federal Assistance Programs***

The future of State and Federal housing programs is uncertain. With each administration programs, funding levels and distribution of funds change. As a result, there is not an adequate, predictable, and steady flow of capital for continuing certain housing programs. The recently adopted federal budget cuts and income tax modification impair the City's ability to cooperate with private developers in making affordable housing available.

### ***Article 34 of the California State Constitution***

Article 34, passed in 1950 and amended in 1978, required that a referendum of public vote be held to approve low-rent housing projects "developed, constructed or acquired in any manner" by any public agency. Article 34 applies to those projects which are publicly owned, are tax exempt and 50 percent or more of the units are reserved for low and moderate income families. A project that receives direct or indirect financing, is not tax exempt, is to be privately owned and less than 50 percent of the units are set aside as low income housing, does not require Article 34 referendum. As such, Article 34 creates an obstacle to any community wishing to become directly involved in the construction of low-income housing.

### ***Removal of Governmental Constraints***

Many of the constraints which influence the production and rehabilitation of housing units as described in the previous section are beyond the



City's control and jurisdiction. However, the City has made a conscious effort to minimize constraints resulting from governmental actions.

The land use controls in the City are not overly restrictive. The 1987 Land Use Element shows that approximately 55 percent of the City's land is designated for residential use. A majority of the land is already developed with so called "tandem" development. Any significant new construction will occur as a result of redevelopment of the older units. The density of the new units will not be less restrictive. However, the new units will be placed on the property in a orderly fashion and will be aesthetically and environmentally pleasing.

The zoning requirements, including setbacks, building height and coverage, have not discouraged housing development. The City's zoning regulations are much less restrictive than those of other cities in Southern California.

To further encourage housing construction the City is considering adopting flexible residential zoning such as Planned Unit Development (PUD). Such development encourages lot assembly and more innovative design. Senior housing, granny flats and mobilehome parks are all allowed in the City. Most other cities discourage such developments by making the requirements too stringent for a developer to realize any economic gain. The City recognizes the value of those less "conventional" units and encourages their construction.

Development fees in Bell Gardens are among the lowest in Southern California. The City has resisted any attempt to derive full compensation for staff hours for review of development to reduce the front-end expenses of developers.

The City is continually reviewing its development application processing procedures and has recently eliminated one step in the approval process for

condominium projects. Prior to this change, a conditional use permit, site plan approval and subdivision hearings were necessary for condominium developments. The City eliminated the CUP requirement thus allowing for a quicker processing of the application. The City's policy is to review cases as soon as possible to avoid delays which could result in higher construction costs.

In the past few years the City strengthened the community development, planning process and staff, while at the same time, continued to utilize contract services at affordable costs.

The City continues to pay for incremental improvements in the water service systems and in effect, subsidizes the private water company. The City's strategy is to assure that basic services and fire flow pressures are available to business and residents.

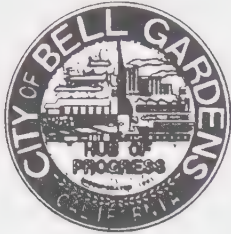
To lessen the burdens of government and accomplish specific projects, the City has been exploring several ways to create and use non-profit organizations. Recently, a non-profit corporation was successful in procuring federal funds for the construction of a 75 unit senior citizen complex. Creative use of non-profit development corporation status can achieve several goals in the field of housing development:

- Capture grant funding for special activities and improvements.
- Act as a liaison for pass-through funding techniques in aid of specific City approved private development projects.
- Market development opportunities.
- Provide limited dividend status for appropriate developments by joining with for-profit entities. All of the above require City approval





under a performance contract. The City is persistently searching for new and creative ways to provide incentives for a variety of affordable and safe housing units.



## HOUSING PROGRAMS

### Goals and Policies

This section of the element describes the City's program for addressing housing needs in light of the constraints that limit the City in its ability to affect housing affordability, accessibility and provision thereof. The housing program implemented by the City will not eliminate all existing housing needs in the City. It would be unreasonable to expect any city with its limited resources to accomplish all of its goals. However, this program represents a continuing effort on the part of the City to expand the availability of housing units to all residents of Bell Gardens.

The Bell Gardens City Council adopted several formal housing goals and policies to give direction to the City's housing program and to provide guidance to local decision makers in dealing with housing related issues. These goals are as follows:

**Goal 1:** Provide and preserve decent housing within a satisfying living environment for households of all socio-economic, racial and ethnic groups.

**Policy:** In order to provide for adequate housing units the following policies have been adopted:

- Encourage the maintenance and repair of existing owner occupied and rental housing units to prevent deterioration.
- Promote the rehabilitation of substandard housing units.
- Provide and maintain an adequate level of public facilities and services in all areas of the City.
- Investigate and pursue programs and funding sources available to assist in the improvement of residential property.
- Prevent the encroachment of incompatible uses or densities into established residential areas.
- Encourage private and public investments to alleviate neighborhood deterioration.

**Goal 2:** Promote and encourage the provision of affordable housing for all income groups.

**Policy:** In order to preserve the affordability of housing, the City of Bell Gardens shall:

- Achieve a housing market that recognizes housing as shelter and not as speculative investment so as to deter rapid turnover which leads to the deterioration of housing stock.
- Encourage private investment for new housing construction for home ownership in a mixture of price ranges and types of housing.
- Continue to apply for and utilize federal and state assistance for the provision of affordable housing.



**Goal 3:** Provide adequate and suitable sites to achieve a variety of housing.

**Policy:** The following policies have been adopted by the City of Bell Gardens to assure that sites are provided for new, affordable housing units:

- Maintain an inventory of available sites which would be suitable for housing construction.
- Continue to apply for federal and state funds designed to promote land acquisition.
- Encourage the recycling of under utilized residential parcels where such recycling is consistent with established land use plans.
- Ensure that all residential areas are provided with adequate public facilities and services.
- Allow high densities where appropriate.

**Goal 4:** Strive to reduce governmental constraints.

**Policy:**

- Support changes in the zoning, subdivision and other applicable codes and ordinances which will encourage more developers to construct affordable housing.

Maintain lower fees for qualifying projects to encourage construction of affordable housing.

Approve a non-profit corporation to assist housing developers by reducing the burdens of government.

**Goal 5:** Promote equal housing opportunities for all segments of the population.

**Policy:** The City of Bell Gardens has adopted the following policies relating to equal housing opportunity:

- Promote equal housing opportunities for all segments of the population.
- Promote housing which meets the special needs of large families, minority, elderly, handicapped and single parent households.
- Promote a greater awareness of tenant/landlord rights.

The above goals and policies are general statements that represent the City's values and provide guidance to the City Council in deciding upon housing related issues. In order to progress towards the attainment of the established goals and policies the City has committed itself to specific actions. The following section discusses these actions, programs and anticipated accomplishments which Bell Gardens has undertaken, or will undertake, to meet its goals. Where possible, the anticipated accomplishments have been quantified. These estimates were generated on the basis of past performance, future availability of funding, as well as resources that are available to the City for addressing local housing needs.

#### ***Program Implementation 1989 - 1994***

Housing preservation and conservation has been the City's priority issue in meeting the housing needs for its residents. The City's housing stock is relatively old. Thirty-eight percent was constructed prior to 1950 and 94 percent of all housing units were constructed prior to 1970. A housing condition survey conducted during the summer of 1989 indicates that 40 percent of the



units are in good condition, 35 percent are in fair condition but require some maintenance and 20 percent are in poor condition indicating the need for structural correction. In order to preserve the existing housing stock and promote neighborhood preservation, the following programs/activities have been implemented (Corresponds to GOAL 1).

### **1. Low-Interest Rehabilitation Loan**

This program is available City-wide to low and moderate income owner occupants. This program is also available to landlords whose tenants are also low and moderate income families. It provides incentives for property owners to upgrade and rehabilitate their residential properties. Funding for this program is available through the Community Development Block Grant program (CDBG) and is administered by the City of Bell Gardens Community Development Department. During the last five years, 34 loans were provided which resulted in the rehabilitation of 68 units. The City anticipates the same amount of activity in the next five years (1989-1994). However, the success of this project will depend greatly on the availability of funds. Should the funding continue at approximately the same level as in the past, the City anticipates that 35-40 loans will be processed resulting in the rehabilitation of up to 80 units.

### **2. Deferred Rehabilitation Loans**

This program provides deferred loans for rehabilitation of homes for lower income families having specific needs and who lack the financial capability to meet standard commercial repayment schedules. The deferred loan is reviewed every five years to determine the borrower's financial need/status. The loan becomes due and payable upon the resale or transfer of the property. The program is funded by CDBG funds and is

administered by the City's Community Development Department. This is also a continuing project. In the last five years the City processed 28 deferred loans which resulted in the rehabilitation of 36 housing units. The future of this program also depends upon the availability of funds. However, should the funding continue at the same level, the City anticipates 25-30 Deferred Rehabilitation Loans will be processed for up to 40 dwelling units.

### **3. Rental Rehabilitation Loans**

The Rental Rehabilitation Loan program provides financial assistance and Section 8 Certificates to rental property owners as an incentive to rehabilitate their rental properties. Property owners of rental units are eligible for deferred loans of up to 50% of the rehabilitation cost if the tenants are low to moderate income households. The program is funded by the Department of Housing and Community Development and is administered by the City's Community Development Department. Seven loans have been processed in the last five years resulting in the rehabilitation of 34 units. It is anticipated that an additional ten loans will be processed during the next five years resulting in the rehabilitation and preservation of 40 units.

### **4. Emergency Grant Program**

Under this program the City provides grant funds to very low income families to make emergency repairs necessary to eliminate immediate health and safety hazards. This program is funded by the Community Development Block Grant Program and is administered by the City's Community Development Department. This is an ongoing program. In the past five years the City





processed 42 grants providing emergency repair to 45 units. Should the funding continue, the City anticipates it will process 40 grants in the next five years.

#### **5. HUD 312 Low Interest Loan**

The HUD 312 home improvement program offers low interest loans to low and moderate income homeowners to rehabilitate their housing units. The City pays the administrative costs for this program, whereas the funds for rehabilitation are provided by the Department of Housing and Community Development. Between 1984 and 1989, six loans were processed rehabilitating nine units. The future of this program is very bleak. The federal government has discontinued additional funding for this program. Only funding available from repayment of loans is being distributed to cities with good past performance records. Bell Gardens will continue to strive to obtain HUD 312 funds should they become available.

#### **6. Review of Infrastructure**

The City of Bell Gardens prepares a five year Capital Improvement Plan which establishes priorities for repair, maintenance and construction of the City's infrastructure. This plan is updated annually. The City also developed a Pavement Management Report and Water Master Plan which are updated frequently. The Pavement Master Plan addresses the routine maintenance of streets on an annual basis, while the Water Master Plan is a long term plan which addresses future water main reconstruction. This continuous effort to upgrade the City's public facilities and services is designed to make development and redevelopment of the inadequately served areas possible.

#### **7. Code Enforcement Programs**

To promote the elimination of conditions which are detrimental to the health, safety and public welfare, and which contribute to the deterioration of the housing stock, the City of Bell Gardens has implemented a systematic code enforcement program. Emphasis has been placed on correcting building and other code violation and deficiencies in deteriorated structures and in removing units that cannot be rehabilitated. In the past five years, the City has responded to over 350 complaints and obtained compliance in 85-90 percent of the cases.

The code enforcement process also includes nuisance abatement and an abandoned vehicle abatement program designed to clean up unsightly and unsafe situations. The code enforcement officers work with the Community Development Department staff to educate residents and provide referrals to the City's housing programs in cases where the property owner/tenant might benefit from the available housing improvement programs. The code enforcement activities are funded by the City's General Fund and CDBG funds.

#### **8. Publicizing the Housing Rehabilitation Programs**

The City is actively marketing the availability of the housing programs through direct mailings, newspaper releases, homeowner meetings and public hearings. The City employs multi-lingual staff to assist the Hispanic and Asian population in obtaining pertinent information.

The actions described are indicative of the special housing needs of the community. The City is faced with deterioration of its housing stock which threatens not only the health and safety, but also the community's desirability as a place to live.



The City will continue to provide the described programs and implement new programs as additional or new federal and state funds become available.

An important factor in conserving and rehabilitating the housing stock is ensuring that this housing remains affordable to the individuals for which it was intended or which presently occupy it. In the rental housing market the need to preserve affordability may conflict with that of preserving housing as rehabilitation may result in higher rents. 77 percent of the City's occupied housing units are rentals. Historically rents in Bell Gardens were lower than in surrounding communities. However, in the last five years rents began to escalate and catch up with the rest of the county. According to a local appraiser, the rents in Bell Gardens are as high as \$.80 - \$.85 per square foot for new units and \$.50 - \$.60 per square foot for older units. The City is restricted in its capacity to affect housing costs due to its limited size and jurisdictional authority, as well as to its relative lack of influence on the regional housing market. However, the City is continually striving to promote affordable housing for its residents and is currently pursuing and implementing several programs which will assist in the development of affordable housing (Corresponds to GOAL 2).

#### **9. Tax Increment Funding**

The City's Redevelopment Agency has two project areas, with the Central City Project Area required to set aside 30 percent of tax increment, and Redevelopment Project Area No. 1 is deferring set aside to complete projects, programs, and activities. The Agency intends to commence depositing the funds in 1996 to make up the deficit.

The low to moderate income housing fund are tax increments allocated to assist in the development

of low to moderate housing. When used, they shall be pursuant to recorded covenants and will remain available to affordable costs for: 1) the longest feasible time, 2) not less than fifteen years for rental units, 3) not less than ten years for owner-occupied units, 4) shorter period of time allowable if units are developed with assistance of federal or state subsidy programs which terminate in a shorter period and cannot be extended or renewed.

#### **10. Section 202 Loans for Elderly and Handicapped**

The City is promoting the Section 202 Loan Program by encouraging local non-profit groups to join with the City in a cooperative effort. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) provides long term, direct low interest loans to private non-profit organizations interested in constructing rental housing units for elderly and/or handicapped persons. This program permits 100 percent financing, amortized to up to 40 years. Section 8 rental assistance must be provided to at least 20 percent of the units in a Section 202 project.

Recently the Human Services Association of Bell Gardens, a non-profit organization, applied and was awarded Section 202 funds for the construction of 75 units for elderly and handicapped persons. The property is located in the southeastern portion of the City and was acquired by the Redevelopment Agency from Los Angeles County. A non-profit organization will run the project which will provide affordable housing to low income senior citizens and handicapped persons. Those 75 units will count towards meeting the housing needs of the City.

#### **11. Section 8 Rental Units**

The City is under contract with the County of Los Angeles Housing Authority to provide and





administer the Section 8 Rental Assistance Program for new and existing units. This program pays the difference between up to 30 percent of the eligible household's income and the market rent of a unit. Low and moderate income households are eligible for this program. Currently 123 households receive Section 8 assistance and many are on the waiting list. If funding continues it is desirable for an additional 45 households to be assisted through 1994.

#### **12. Mobile Home Park Cooperative**

In order to encourage home ownership and preserve affordability of housing the City promoted and assisted the Casa Mobilehome Park residents in acquiring the site. The City provided assistance and/or upgrading of the infrastructure of the park. As a result, 56 mobilehomes were preserved and are under a cooperative ownership by lower income persons.

#### **13. Mixed Uses**

The City of Bell Gardens allows mixed uses (commercial & residential) to co-exist in its Central Business District Redevelopment Project Area. This philosophy further promotes housing affordability. Ordinarily the mixed nature of uses result in a deterrent to residential stability. This is true in other parts of the City where the encroachment of industrial and commercial uses into residential zones has contributed to the deterioration in several neighborhoods. Under the Redevelopment Law the City has increased authority in deciding on type, location, design and control of development. Through proper implementation of the General Plan, Zoning Ordinance and Redevelopment Plans, the City controls the nature and magnitude of development and through its continuing redevelopment efforts in the downtown area, the City has improved the desirability of the mixed uses while conserving affordable housing units.

#### **14. Density Bonuses**

The City encourages private ownership and greater affordability through a density bonus provision in the R-3 (Multi-Family Residential) Zone. In the R-3 Zone the allowable number of units per square foot increases as the land area increases. On lots ranging from 15,000 to 43,560 square-feet in area, one unit may be constructed for each 2,000 square-feet of lot area. On a parcel containing more than 43,560 square feet of lot area, one dwelling unit may be constructed for each 1,750 square feet of lot area.

To encourage property ownership, the density for condominiums is even greater. On a lot containing between 15,000 to 43,560 square-feet of area, one condominium may be constructed for each 1,625 square-feet of area and one condominium may be constructed for each 1,400 square feet of lot area on parcels containing greater than 43,560 square feet of area.

In addition to the specific density bonuses provided through the Zoning Ordinance, the City of Bell Gardens has included in its Land Use Element opportunities for higher density to occur in an orderly fashion. High-density and mixed use developments have occurred throughout the City in a chaotic manner. The Land Use Element proposes containment of the higher densities to specific areas of the City. This proposal will be examined in a subsequent section of this document.

#### **15. "Granny Flats" and Mobilehomes**

In the early 1980's the City of Bell Gardens revised the Zoning Ordinance to allow second units or "Granny Flats" in certain residential zones, mobilehomes on permanent foundations in single family residential zones, as well as



mobilehome parks. Where most cities discourage or plainly disallow second units and mobilehomes, the City recognizes their value in promoting family and neighborhood stability and affordable housing.

#### **16. Senior Housing Ordinance**

The City of Bell Gardens has recently amended its Zoning Ordinance to allow Senior Housing in all residential zones in the City. The development standards for these units differ from the requirements for conventional units in that the ordinance provides for smaller and/or efficiency units with reduced parking requirements, higher densities and common recreation areas. These provisions allow an additional avenue for private investment in the City of Bell Gardens and at the same time, promote affordable housing. Through its Redevelopment Authority the City of Bell Gardens is prepared to assist any potential developer in the senior housing development process.

#### **17. Zoning Ordinance and General Plan Amendment**

In 1987, the City of Bell Gardens amended the Land Use Element of their General Plan and the Zoning Ordinance. As a result, development standards were strengthened and outdated County regulations, which were incorporated in these standards were deleted. Clear, concise, updated regulations were adopted which reflect the City's current goals and policies, as well as the housing and land use conditions and patterns of the City of Bell Gardens.

The revised Zoning Ordinance allows for Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) in certain areas of the City. Such provision encourages small lot development, and if utilized correctly, will result in an orderly parcelization of the existing deep lots and elimination of blighted conditions

resulting from tandem developments. Planned Unit Developments on these lots will be more affordable than conventional single family homes. The City is preparing a Request For Proposal (RFP) for a 20 unit PUD which will allow for a zero (0) lot line requirement.

#### **18. Consultation with Developers**

City staff provides consultation to aid developers in expanding housing opportunities to facilitate development of more affordable housing and assist developers in applying to various agencies for funding for the development of affordable and/or assisted housing.

The provision of adequate sites for housing construction is a key element in satisfying the housing needs of all residents in a community. Since the City is practically built out, creative land use provisions and zoning and development standards must be employed in order to utilize the few remaining vacant parcels for housing construction. In spite of constraints and limited land resources available for housing, the following actions have been taken, and will continue into the 1990's, to provide adequate sites for construction/rehabilitation of housing units (Corresponds with GOAL 3).

#### **19. Inventory of Sites**

Continually update the inventory of sites suitable for residential development with special concern for sites appropriate for affordable housing.

During the summer of 1989, a vacant residential land survey was conducted as part of the housing condition survey. Approximately 5.0 acres of land are vacant and suitable for residential construction. Fifty-three rental and 67 condominium housing units could be built on the





surveyed vacant land based on the allowed densities.

Included in the survey is a two and one half (2 1/2) acre parcel of land recently rezoned from industrial use to residential use. This parcel is located in the northeastern portion of the City and is a former trucking terminal. This parcel has been earmarked as a site for the development of 200 senior citizen housing units. However, it was discovered that the land is contaminated and, at the present time, unsuitable for construction. The City, as well as private developers, are making a continuous effort to eliminate the hazardous conditions on this site and over time will be successful. Although the City would prefer that this site be developed for senior citizen housing, it may become financially prohibitive for a developer to construct such units. It is anticipated that 30 - 40 single family homes could be constructed on this site once it has been certified that it is free of contaminants. As there is no other vacant land in the city, housing needs will have to be met through rehabilitation of existing units and the 75 section 202 units. Additional new low income units can only be added through Redevelopment Agency involvement. The City has made several attempts to create a Residential Redevelopment Project Area which was denied by Los Angeles County and other taxing agencies.

## 20. *Replacement of Sites*

The City Redevelopment Agency, has adopted a replacement housing plan designed to replace housing units removed by redevelopment, and in addition, insure that a percentage of replacement housing is available to persons of low and moderate income pursuant to the following requirements:

- Replace low to moderate units which were removed, with units at affordable cost on a one-to-one basis, within four years.

- Units developed by Agency
- 15 percent must be available at low to moderate affordable cost.
- 15 percent must be very low affordable cost.
- Percentage requirements apply in the aggregate and not on a case to case basis.
- Agency must use covenants to insure, for the life of the plan, continuing availability of replacement housing. Use of funds for low to moderate income housing requires that covenants run for 30 years to remain for use by lower income persons. Federal or state subsidized units terminate in a shorter period and cannot be extended or renewed.

These requirements now apply to the Central City Redevelopment Project Area and will apply to Project Area No. 1 commencing in 1996. Between 1984 and 1987, 174 units were removed in the Redevelopment Project Area to give way to commercial development. All 174 units will be replaced within four years. Due to the built out nature of the City, many of these units will be replaced by rehabilitating the existing housing stock.

During the same period of time, 260 private housing units were constructed which provided a greater choice of units for displaced households. In 1988 and 1989, 39 units were removed, all families assisted in relocation and the same number of units will be constructed and/or rehabilitated by 1993. One hundred three privately constructed units were added to the housing stock. The Redevelopment Agency is funding this program and it is anticipated that 56 units will be replaced on a one to one basis in the next five years.





## 21. General Plan Amendment

In 1987, the City of Bell Gardens updated and amended the Land Use Element of the General Plan. The 1965, Land Use Element assigned higher residential land use densities to deteriorating neighborhoods in an effort to encourage private reinvestment. This private reinvestment has not taken place in the manner anticipated and the previously planned higher density residential development did not occur. In 1981, the City amended its Land Use Element without changing its goals and policies. As the City continued to be confronted with incompatible land uses and deteriorating housing stock, the City needed to reevaluate its 1965 and 1981 goals and policies. The 1987 Land Use Element was developed to identify and optimize the opportunities in the City for revitalization. The 1987 Land Use Element's goals and objectives are based on the realization that the City is almost built-out and very few vacant parcels are left for new housing construction. The higher density objectives of the 1965 and 1981 Land Use Element are, therefore, continued except that the higher densities are contained to appropriate areas. In the 1987 Land Use Element, higher residential densities are encouraged but in a planned and orderly manner. Table 2-21 shows the comparison between the 1981 and 1987 Land Use Elements in relation to the amount of land area planned for residential uses.

By reassigning and shifting the residential zones, the City is hoping to achieve the following results:

- Stabilize the existing single family neighborhoods.
- Stabilize lower density neighborhoods located along local collector streets and prevent high density and incompatible development from intruding into these areas.
- Encourage higher density developments along major streets and the Central Business District.
- Designate more land for residential development (845 acres compared to 821 acres in 1981). However, lower the total maximum build-out capacity in the City (15,163 dwelling units compared to 22,813 dwelling units).
- Reduce the overall density of the City and focus and encourage developments in areas deemed most suitable for higher density use.
- Recycle existing, under utilized parcels by redesignating their use for residential development.



**TABLE 2-21  
RESIDENTIAL LAND USE DISTRIBUTION 1987 AND 1981 LAND USE ELEMENT**

	1987				1981			
	Density One	Density Two	Density Three	Total	Density One	Density Two	Density Three	Total
Land Use Designations	Very Low	Low	Medium	---	Low	Medium	High	---
Residential Densities (dwelling units per acre)	8.7	15	30	---	9	18	30	---
Planned Land Area	127.04	497.73	219.73	845	28.8	100.28	691.63	821
Percentage Increase					341.1%	396.3%	-68.2%	2.9%
Maximum Built-Out Capacity (number of dwelling units)	1,105	7,466	6,592	15,163	259	1,805	20,749	22,813
Percentage Increase					326.4%	313.6%	-68.2%	-33.5%
Maximum Population*	3,868	22,398	16,480	42,676	907	5,415	51,872	58,194
* Maximum population based on the following assumptions: 3.5 persons per unit at Density One; 3 persons per unit at Density Two; and 2.5 persons per unit at Density Three. Source: City of Bell Gardens, Land Use Element, 1987.								

## 22. Landbanking

The City is continually applying for Community Development Block Grant funds and other federal and state funds for acquiring underutilized sites appropriate for residential uses. The land would subsequently be sold to private, non-profit developers or sponsors for constructing affordable units. This is an ongoing process funded by CDBG funds and the City's General Fund.

## 23. Land Use Controls

Use zoning and other Land Use Controls to ensure the compatibility of residential areas with surrounding uses. Utilize environmental and other developmental review procedures to ensure that all new residential developments are provided with adequate public facilities and services.

Periodically review the Zoning Ordinance to insure that it reflects the Housing Element's goals and programs while maintaining desirable development standards. Although land use control and zoning ordinance review may not result in housing production, those actions will ensure that new developments will be constructed to city standards. They will have light, open space and other livable amenities.

The Department of Planning and Community Development shall be responsible for implementing the above actions. Financing is available through the City's General Fund and other sources.

The City of Bell Gardens is committed to helping developers, property owners and anyone interested in constructing residential dwelling units by directing them to the appropriate





personnel and, where possible, providing a fast tracking mechanism for projects which expand housing opportunities. To carry out and implement Goal 4, the City of Bell Gardens proposes to implement the following actions:

#### **24. Review of Administrative Procedures**

The City will continue periodic review of its administrative procedures for granting development permits. City staff will encourage concurrent filing of multi-developmental applications and provide prompt, accurate information to contractors, architects and property owners.

#### **25. Dissemination of Information**

The City will continue its ongoing program of assisting developers in site selection and utilization of existing federal, state and other programs to construct new or rehabilitate existing dwelling units. City staff will continue to inform residents of provision in the Zoning Ordinance which permit "Granny Flats", mobilehomes and senior citizen and handicapped housing. Staff is capable of communicating with residents and developers in several different languages. This

factor can ease and expedite the approval process for developments.

#### **26. Ordinance Review**

The City will continue to periodically review its codes and ordinances to ensure that easily understood language is used and that outdated language and regulations are deleted.

#### **27. Non-Profit Organizations**

The City is encouraging non-profit organizations to become involved in housing development. The process of redevelopment or development of housing units by a Redevelopment Agency is somewhat cumbersome. Pursuant to state law, a development may be expedited if constructed by a non-profit organization rather than by a Redevelopment Agency. By complying with the City's development standards, high quality developments can be processed in a minimum amount of time. The funds for the 75 Section 202 units were secured by a non profit organization.

#### **28. Development Fees**

The City has maintained low processing fees for development projects so as to not discourage building in Bell Gardens. Table 2-22 identifies the fee structure for Bell Gardens.

TABLE 2-22 PLANNING FEES	
Application	Fee
Conditional Use Permit (CUP)	\$ 206.00
Zone Variance	\$ 206.00
Plot Plan Review	None



TABLE 2-22 PLANNING FEES	
Application	Fee
Site Plan Review	\$ 25.00
General Plan Amendment	None
Zone Change	\$ 295.00
Tentative Tract Map*	\$ 50.00
Parcel Map**	\$ 25.00
Certificate of Compliance***	\$ 25.00
Negative Declaration	None
Environmental Impact Review (Preliminary)	\$ 50.00
Environmental Impact Report	\$ Cost
Specific Plan	None
<p>* Tract map \$8.00 for each lot for the first 25 lots, plus \$6.00 for each of the next 25 lots, plus \$2.00 for the next 50 lots, plus \$1.00 for each lot in excess of 100.</p> <p>** Parcel maps plus \$3.00 per lot.</p> <p>*** Certificate of compliance plus recordation costs.</p> <p>Note: Environmental Impact Report (EIR) fees are based on a Time and Materials (T&amp;M) fee calculation. This fee includes the preparation and certification of each EIR submitted.</p>	

The City contracts with a consulting firm for its plan check and engineering services and with Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning for the processing of subdivision requests. This is a common practice for small cities as technical personnel are expensive for small cities to support on a continuous basis. Providing housing opportunities for all households, regardless of race or color, religion, sex, family size, age or physical ability is an essential element of a sound housing program.

An important aspect of discrimination in housing is the exclusion of families with children and handicapped or differently abled persons from the rental market. A constricted rental market

such as exists in Bell Gardens, tends to exclude large families and handicapped persons, as landlords prefer to rent to adults and fully abled persons to minimize maintenance and management costs. Handicapped and elderly persons access to decent housing is often limited because of their special needs for elimination of architectural barriers.

In order to ensure equal housing opportunity for all persons, the City of Bell Gardens has implemented the following programs (Corresponds to GOAL 5).



### **29. Fair Housing**

Continue to contract with the Fair Housing Foundation of Long Beach to process complaints of housing discrimination in the City and provide counseling in tenant/landlord disputes. Special assistance for Hispanic and female head of household and other housing services is also provided. This program is funded by the Community Development Block Grant program and is ongoing.

### **30. Loan/Grant Programs**

Continue to provide loans and grants to owners of rental housing for modifications necessary to make units accessible to physically challenged individuals and elderly persons. This is an ongoing activity funded through the Community Development Block Grant program.

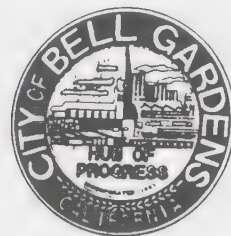
### **31. Los Angeles County Housing Authority**

Continue to utilize the housing information and referral services offered by the Los Angeles County Housing Authority for persons seeking affordable housing. This is an ongoing activity and is funded through the City's General Fund.

The City's proposed Housing Action Plan (1989 - 1994) could result in the rehabilitation of up to 500 additional dwelling units and the provision of rental assistance to 54 additional households by 1992. Approximately 128 new housing units could be constructed in the City over the next five years. These units include the 75, Section 202 Senior and Handicapped units and would include both market rate and affordable housing. This number does not reflect the redevelopment of existing underutilized parcels.

As previously indicated, the City of Bell Gardens ability to affect local housing needs is limited by the unavailability of vacant land for residential

construction, enabling legislation, political leverage and funding for housing related activities. However, the City is committed to explore all opportunities which could result in provision of adequate housing for all segments of the population.



### **EVALUATION OF THE 1984 HOUSING ELEMENT UPDATE**

The California statute requires that a periodic review and evaluation of the Housing Element be conducted but not less than every five years. The last Housing Element Update was prepared and adopted by the City of Bell Gardens in 1984. The following is a review and evaluation of the 1984 Amendment to the Housing Element: The majority of the housing programs listed in the 1984 element are ongoing and have been included in the "Implementation" section of this document. Their quantitative objectives have, however, been changed to reflect the future policies and objectives, as well as the availability of funding and sites within the City.

The 1984 Housing Element amendment was written at a time when the City was proposing to create a Redevelopment Project Area No. 3. The main purpose of this project area was to provide private and City funds to promote rehabilitation, conservation and construction of new housing units, predominantly for low and moderate income households.





The City spent a tremendous amount of time, energy and funds to justify the formation of this project area, and the many programs which would be made available through the proposed joint ventures between the City and private investors. However, due to constraints beyond the City's control, the Redevelopment Project Area was not approved by Los Angeles County and other taxing agencies. As a result, many of the proposed programs in the 1984 element were not implemented and their quantitative objectives were not met. Other programs which did not depend on the creation of the Redevelopment Project Area were fully implemented. Some of these programs are discussed below:

The Code enforcement procedures are fundamental in preventing and correcting conditions of neighborhood blight and encourage upgrading of the City's housing stock. The code enforcement program is ongoing and very effective. Approximately 200 code enforcement cases have resulted in some sort of rehabilitation or clean up with the help of the City's CDBG funds.

The City's Housing Rehabilitation Programs, administered by the Community Development Department, with Community Development Block Grant funds (CDBG), encourages neighborhood preservation and rehabilitation. These programs provide deferred loans and grants to low and moderate income tenants and property owners for home improvements to single or multi family units. In the last five years 111 loans/grants have been given through the various programs which have resulted in rehabilitation or emergency repairs to 183 dwelling units. Six loans were processed under the HUD 312 Low Interest Loan Program.

The City continues to contract with the Los Angeles County Housing Authority to administer

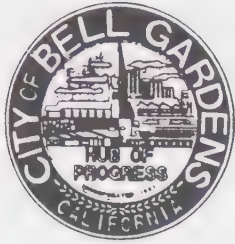
its Section 8 Program. Currently, 123 households are being assisted under this program.

Other accomplishments since the 1984 Housing Element Amendment include the revision of the City's Zoning Ordinance and the Land Use Element of the General Plan.

The provisions for mobilehomes, "granny flats" planned unit developments (PUDs) with zero lot lines and zoning of the central business district for mixed uses have all contributed to the meeting of the City's goals and policies for the provision of affordable and accessible housing for residents of all income groups.

The goals of the City of Bell Gardens have not changed since the 1984 element. While reflecting local community values, the goals are consistent with the legislative intent of Article 10.6. As noticed earlier, goals are general statements of purpose and may extend beyond the time frame of this Housing Element (1989-1994). Many of the programs which will be implemented in the time span of this updated element do not differ greatly from the ones listed in the 1984 Housing Element. These programs have proven to be successful and will be continued. Other programs proposed for implementation reflect the current needs, conditions and funding availability. With very limited numbers of sites available for housing construction this element stresses programs which will maximize housing rehabilitation and preservation rather than new housing construction.





## ENERGY CONSERVATION MEASURES

In the last decade, as the cost of fuel has become increasingly more expensive, homeowners have become aware of energy conserving measures. The most readily available energy conservation alternatives are easily installed in new homes. As in many cities, the older homes in Bell Gardens were built with minimum concern for energy conservation. However, there are numerous energy conserving measures which can be retrofitted into existing older units which conserve the use of non-renewable fuels and save money.

To conserve heat generated by gas or oil fired heating units and minimize the loss of heat, older homes can be insulated in the attic and exterior walls. Windows and exterior doors can be fitted with airtight devices, caulking or other available means.

To conserve electricity and minimize costs, a properly designed and installed skylight is a helpful addition to existing housing.

Solar energy is practical, cost effective and an environmentally sound method used to heat and cool a house. With proper design this resource provides for cooling in the summer and heating in the winter. Solar heating can also be used to heat domestic water.

Although solar energy is an unlimited resource which remains readily available, retrofitting older units may be too costly for the average homeowner in the City. The City should

encourage the use of solar energy devices for new residential construction.

Water conservation techniques can save a family thousands of gallons of wasted water per year. The cost associated with these measures is minimal. There are many over the counter plumbing products which eliminate waste by restricting the volume of water flow from faucets, shower heads, toilets, sprinklers, etc. By repairing dripping faucets and using water more conservatively, a family can also save water and money. The local water company can provide brochures which explain many of the water conservation measures.

The Southern California Edison Company provides free energy audits to local residents on request. Energy audits are extremely valuable in pinpointing specific areas in the home which are responsible for energy losses. The inspection results in specific recommendations to remedy energy insufficiency.

Many citizens in Bell Gardens are not aware of the programs which would help them save energy and lower their utility bills. Most utility companies educate the public on the topic of conservation by including multi-lingual brochures and information with their monthly billing statement. The City can aid in expanding these programs by supplying the public with pertinent information including the appropriate contacts in the utility companies.

The State of California Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission has devised guidelines used by building officials to implement regulations established by the Commission. All new development must demonstrate an effort to comply with energy regulations and, if necessary, implement specific design measures that will reduce energy consumption to what the state considers an





acceptable level. In addition the following passive design techniques could be used in new developments to reduce energy consumption:

- Locating the structure on the northern portion or the sunniest area on the site.
- Designing the structure to admit the maximum amount of sunlight and utilizing skylights.
- Locating windows on the south wall and designing east, west and north windows to be small in size, recessed and double glazed.
- Making the main entrance small and separated from the living areas or orienting the entrance away from prevailing winds.
- Locating indoor areas of maximum usage along the south face of the building and placing corridors, closets, laundry rooms and garages along the north part of the building to serve as a buffer between the warmer south face and the cooler north face of the building.

The City of Bell Gardens encourages the incorporation of the state required energy conservation measures as well as the installation of energy conserving appliances, fixtures and other devices into the design of new residential units or rehabilitated units wherever feasible.



## **HOUSING ELEMENT BACKGROUND REPORT**

The Housing Profile Report discusses the demographic, socioeconomic, and housing

characteristics of the City. Specific sections included in the analysis of the City demographics are: population, race and ethnicity, age, and homelessness. The discussion of socioeconomic characteristics includes: household income, employment, and public assistance. The analysis of housing stock characteristics analyzes: housing trends, housing conditions, tenure, vacancy, housing costs and rents, large households and overcrowding, female-headed households, minority households, and elderly households. Also included in the Housing Profile Report are discussions on constraints to housing production, an inventory of land suitable for residential development, and a needs assessment.

Data and information on population and housing characteristics were derived from the most recent studies available: the 1970, 1980 and 1990 U.S. Census, the Department of Finance Annual Population and Housing Estimates, and data from various local agencies. Until the full results of the 1990 U.S. Census is made available, the most comprehensive source is the 1980 U.S. Census. For those issues where more current data was not available, the 1980 U.S. Census was extrapolated to attain estimated 1990 data.

### **Demographic Characteristics**

#### ***Population***

When the City of Bell Gardens incorporated as a general law city in 1961, it had a population of 27,603 persons. The growth rate increased gradually during the 1960s and 1970s as the ethnic composition of the community changed. In the late 1970's, the population growth rates of the City accelerated, resulting in a 1980 population of 34,117. The 1980 population represented nearly a 16 percent increase over the population in 1970.



According to the 1990 U.S. Census, the City's population was 42,355 (an increase of 24%).

According to the 1992 Department of Finance Statistics, the City now has 43,350 residents. The population trends for the City are summarized in Table 2-23.

**TABLE 2-23  
POPULATION TRENDS FOR BELL GARDENS: 1960 TO 1990**

Year	Population		Average Annual Growth Rate		Change			
					Number		Percent	
	Bell Gardens	County	Bell Gardens	County	Bell Gardens	County	Bell Gardens	County
1961 <sup>1</sup>	27,603	6,038,771 <sup>2</sup>	---	---	---	---	---	---
1970	29,308	7,032,075	0.7%	1.8%	1,705	993,304	6.2%	16.4%
1980	34,117	7,477,421	1.6%	0.6%	4,809	445,346	16.4%	6.3%
1990	42,355	8,863,164	2.4%	1.9%	8,238	1,385,743	24.1%	18.5%

<sup>1</sup> 1961 was the year of incorporation.

<sup>2</sup> 1960 U.S. Census Data

Sources: 1970, 1980, 1990 U.S. Census

The City of Bell Gardens, along with its neighbors, has had one of the greatest increases in population growth in Southern California.

Table 2-24 summarizes the population growth in Bell Gardens compared with the surrounding communities.

**TABLE 2-24  
POPULATION TRENDS IN THE BELL GARDENS AREA: 1970 TO 1990**

City	Population		Change	
	1970	1990	Number	Percent
Bell Gardens	29,308	42,355	13,047	44.5%
South Gate	56,909	86,284	29,375	51.6%
Downey	33,482	56,065	22,583	67.4%
Pico Rivera	54,170	59,177	5,007	9.2%
Montebello	42,807	59,564	16,757	39.1%
County	7,032,075	8,863,164	1,831,089	26.0%

Sources: 1970 and 1990 U.S. Census.



The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) in 1988 projected a population of 36,748 for the City of Bell Gardens by the year 2010. The data obtained from the U.S. Census indicates that the current population of the City has already far exceeded SCAG'S 2010 projection. If the population were to stabilize, some decline in population would be possible as children in the existing households age and leave home.

### Race and Ethnicity

The racial and ethnic composition of the City underwent an equally dramatic shift between

1970 and 1990. The non-Hispanic population dropped 65.8 percent and is projected to continue to drop in the future. As evidenced in Table 2-25, the Hispanic population accounted for about one fifth of the City's population in 1970. By 1990, nearly 90% of the City's residents were Hispanic. There were some differences between the 1970 and 1990 Census regarding the definition of "Hispanic". However, this difference does not alter the dramatic changes in ethnicity in the City which has occurred in recent years.

TABLE 2-25  
RACE AND ETHNICITY

City	White		Hispanic		Black		Other	
	1970	1990	1970	1990	1970	1990	1970	1990
Bell Gardens	74.2%	10.1%	21.7%	87.5%	0.1%	0.4%	4.0%	2.0%
South Gate	81.0%	13.7%	17.3%	83.1%	0.1%	1.3%	1.6%	1.9%
Downey	88.1%	55.4%	10.5%	32.3	0.1%	3.1%	1.3%	9.1%
Pico Rivera	36.0%	13.1%	61.5%	83.2%	0.0%	0.5%	2.5%	3.2%
Montebello	46.3%	16.8%	47.1%	67.6%	0.0%	0.8%	6.6%	14.8%
County	67.0%	40.8%	18.3%	37.8%	10.8%	10.5%	3.9%	10.8%

Sources: 1970, 1980, 1990 U.S. Census.

### Age

The age distribution of the population remained relatively stable between 1970 and 1980. This

trend changed somewhat in the past decade. Compared to Los Angeles County, Bell Gardens' population continues to grow younger, as shown in Table 2-26.

TABLE 2-26  
AGE DISTRIBUTION FOR BELL GARDENS: 1970 - 1990

Age (Years)	1970	1980	1990
0-13	9,987 (34.0%)	11,944 (35.0%)	13,640 (40.0%)





TABLE 2-26 AGE DISTRIBUTION FOR BELL GARDENS: 1970 - 1990			
Age (Years)	1970	1980	1990
14-20	3,252 (11.1%)	4,364 (12.8%)	6,029 (10.4%)
34	6,742 (23.0%)	8,737 (25.6%)	11,745 (23.1%)
35-44	2,790 (9.5%)	3,178 (9.3%)	5,111 (12.4%)
45-54	2,541 (8.7%)	2,166 (6.3%)	2,497 (5.3%)
55-64	2,107 (7.2%)	1,814 (5.3%)	1,544 (3.6%)
65 +	1,889 (6.4%)	1,914 (5.6%)	1,789 (5.3%)
Median Age	23.5	22.1	20.7
Source: 1970, 1980, 1990 U.S. Census			

In 1970 and 1980, 45.1% and 47.8% (respectively) of the City's population was 20 years of age or younger. By 1990, over 50% of the City's population was 20 years of age or younger. The fastest growing age group in the past three decades has been the 0-13 years of age group. More significantly, 6,373 residents (15%) are 5 years of age or younger. Furthermore, the 55-66 age group decreased from 7.1% to 5.3% of the total population during the 1980's.

This predominance of a younger population is predicted to continue into the 1990's given the most recent U.S. Census statistics. The median age in 1980 was 22.1 years as compared to Los Angeles County's median age of 29.8 years. According to the 1990 Census, the median age in the City fell to 20.7 years in 1990 while the median age increased to 32.1 for Los Angeles County. A more youthful population will place greater demands on the already overcrowded

schools, parks and recreation facilities, and other services related to children and young adults.

### *Homelessness*

The homeless crisis has become a national concern. The causes for homelessness in Southern California may be attributed to the deinstitutionalization of the mentally ill, drug and alcohol abuse, economic displacement, lack of affordable housing, and domestic violence. Services and support for the homeless have not been adequate to help all persons. The length of lines and waiting lists with each service provider attests to the fact that the homelessness problem is not a temporary phenomena. In an effort to assist the homeless population, the State of California has mandated that housing elements analyze and address the homelessness problem in each locality.



The limited number of homeless persons in Bell Gardens points to an insufficient need for an emergency or transitional shelter in the City. Homeless persons are encouraged to seek assistance from the Department of Public Social Services on Atlantic Avenue and local community services (Chicano Service Action Center, Human Services Association) in neighboring cities.

The nearest homeless shelter is the Bell Homeless Shelter at Mansfield Way (see Exhibit 2-1). The shelter is operated by the Salvation Army and opened in 1988. It provides 250 beds in winter and 150 beds in summer. The winter colds have resulted in overcapacity at the shelter with a maximum of 318 persons at one time. Twenty percent of the persons served are female and eighty percent are male. No children are served by the shelter. Aside from food and a place to stay the night, the Bell Shelter offers counselling services, legal advice, social security income assistance, religious advice, social

activities and games. A maximum stay of 60 days is permitted for people who are looking for work, are working, or are in training classes. Walk-in persons are not accommodated at the shelter, rather the Salvation Army has pick-up points in Hollywood, Eastmont, Huntington Park, Compton, Maywood, Long Beach and downtown Los Angeles. At these points, homeless individuals are gathered in the afternoon and brought to the shelter for dinner, bed and breakfast. By morning, the homeless are brought back to their pick-up points. The nearest pick-up point for persons in Bell Gardens is at 2965 East Gage Avenue in Huntington Park.

### Socioeconomic Characteristics

#### *Household Income*

The City's median and per capita income historically have been significantly lower than that for Los Angeles County, as shown in Table 2-27.

**TABLE 2-27  
HOUSEHOLD INCOME**

	1970			1990		
	Bell Gardens	County	% <sup>1</sup>	Bell Gardens	County	% <sup>1</sup>
Median Income	\$7,959	\$10,972	72.5%	\$23,819	\$34,965	68.1%
Per Capita Income	\$2,610	\$3,246	80.4%	\$6,125	\$16,149	37.9%

<sup>1</sup> Bell Gardens as a percentage of the County.  
Source: 1970 and 1990 U.S. Census.

Table 2-27 shows that in 1970, Bell Gardens' median income was 72.5% of the County's median income. Also in 1970, Bell Gardens' per capita income was 80.4% of the County's per capita income. However, in 1990, Bell Gardens' median income dropped to 68.1% of the County's median income and Bell Gardens' per capita

income dropped dramatically to 37.9% of the County's per capita income.

The 1988 Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA), prepared by the Southern California Associate of Governments, identified housing needs by various income groups based upon the County's median household income. Low income





households are those households that have an annual income between 50% to 80% of the County's median household income. Moderate income households are families earning 80% or more of the County's median. Fifty percent of the County's median income (\$34,965) calculates to \$17,483. Eighty percent of the County's median income calculates to \$27,972. The 1990 U.S. Census indicates approximately 2,311 households in Bell Gardens are considered low income and approximately 1,314 households are considered moderate income. Very low income households are defined as those with annual incomes less than 50% of the County's median income. The 1990 U.S. Census indicates approximately 3,166 households in Bell Gardens as being very low income. Out of 9,300 total households in the City, 59% are either very low or low income households. This compares to 40% very low and low income households in the County, as a whole.

### Employment

According to the 1990 Census, a large number of the City's residents were employed in the

manufacturing and wholesale/retail industries which accounted for more than 60% of the employed population (see Table 2-28). A much smaller percentage of the labor force in the City (6.3%) was employed in professional and technical positions, compared to the County as a whole (27.7%). Unemployment presents a major problem in the City of Bell Gardens. Statistical information in 1985 indicated a 15 percent unemployment rate as compared to 9.8 percent in 1980. The current unemployment rate in the City is difficult to determine though some current estimates place the local unemployment rate at over 20%. These figures have serious implications on housing conditions, overcrowding, and other socioeconomic factors.

Of those persons employed in 1980, over 48.5% of the City's residents were involved in manufacturing or production-related jobs compared to 23.4% of the County. Only 6.3% of the City's residents were employed in technical/professional jobs compared to 27.7% for the County.

TABLE 2-28  
SOURCE OF EMPLOYMENT FOR RESIDENTS

Industry	People Employed	% Employed	County % Employed
Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, and Mining	120	0.8%	1.5%
Construction	1,269	8.4%	5.9%
Manufacturing	5,442	36.0%	20.5%
Transportation	651	4.3%	4.4%
Communication, Public Utilities	171	1.1%	2.4%
Wholesale and Retail Trades	3,757	24.8%	20.5%
Finance, Real Estate, Insurance	273	1.8%	7.8%
Services	3,301	21.8%	34.2%



**TABLE 2-28  
SOURCE OF EMPLOYMENT FOR RESIDENTS**

Industry	People Employed	% Employed	County % Employed
Public Administration	149	1.0%	2.8%
Total Employed (16 years of age and over)	15,133	100.0%	100.0%
Source: 1990 U.S. Census.			

The Los Angeles Private Industry Council periodically conducts an inventory of jobs and job sites throughout the County. Both variables are categorized according to major sectors of employment (industrial, agriculture, etc.). The

most recent estimates that have been published were from the mid 1980's and are summarized in Table 2-29. As indicated, the bulk (65%) of the City's jobs are in two sectors; services and manufacturing.

**TABLE 2-29  
JOB SITES AND EMPLOYMENT IN THE CITY**

Sector	Jobs Sites	% of Total	Employees	% of Total
Agriculture	2	negl.	53	negl.
Mining	1	negl.	26	negl.
Construction	36	10.8%	496	6.4%
Manufacturing	62	18.7%	2,074	26.8%
Transportation/Communication	7	0.2%	217	2.8%
Wholesale Trade	34	10.2%	629	8.1%
Retail Trade	81	24.4%	871	11.3%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	14	4.2%	197	2.5%
Services	87	26.2%	2,967	38.3%
Public Administration	8	2.4%	210	2.7%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>332</b>		<b>7,740</b>	

### Housing Stock Characteristics

### Housing Trends

Unlike much of the rapid growth in suburban areas, this increase in Bell Gardens did not result from new residential development. Most of this

increase is related to a larger household size, which is reflected in census statistics that indicate a more youthful population (Table 2-26). In 1980, there were 9,761 units in the City compared to 9,546 in 1990. The City experienced a net loss of 215 units during a period in which the population grew by 8,238



persons (24.1%). Most of the neighboring communities experienced similar population growth rates during periods in which new housing development was either stable or declining.

Of the 9,546 housing units in 1990, approximately 5,972 units (62.6%) were considered single-family (attached and detached); 540 units (5.7%) were classified as duplex; 955 units (10%) were in structures containing three to four units and 1,552 units (16.2%) were in structures containing five or more units. A total of 527 units were classified as mobile homes and other types of units. According to the 1980 U.S. Census, the percentage of owner and renter occupied was 23.7% and 71.8% respectively. By 1990, the distribution of owner-occupied and rental units was 22.5% and 77.5% respectively. The trend over the past decade has been a slight decline in the percent of owner-occupied units.

### Housing Condition

A large number of the City's housing units show signs of deterioration. According to the 1989 Housing Element survey, 40 percent of the housing units in the City are in good condition; more than 35 percent of the units are in fair condition; 20 percent are in poor condition and 5 percent are in bad condition and likely to need replacement or very major reconstruction.

The age of the housing stock is a major contributor to the overall housing conditions in the City. U.S. Census data for 1980 indicates that almost 68 percent of the existing units were constructed before 1970 (Table 2-30). According to building permit activity in Bell Gardens, it is estimated that approximately five percent of the City's units were constructed between 1980 and 1989.

TABLE 2-30 AGE OF THE HOUSING STOCK		
Year Structure was Built	Number	Percent
1970-1980	654	6.7
1960-1969	2,497	25.6
1950-1959	2,954	30.3
Prior to 1940	3,654	37.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,759</b>	<b>100.00</b>
Source: U.S. Census, 1980		

### Tenure

Bell Gardens' housing units are mainly renter-occupied (77.5%) even though the type of housing is predominantly single family units (62.6%). This compares to County figures of 51.8% renter-occupied units with 55.2% of all

units as single family. The development of multi-family housing in the City will continue to keep the majority of residents as renters. Property owners who do not occupy their units would generally have less regard for the maintenance and condition of housing units. Renters, on the other hand, have very little incentive to spend for the rehabilitation of units that will not have a tangible return on investment.





### Vacancy

The availability of vacant housing units provides households continued choices for different unit types to accommodate their changing needs: single persons, newly-married couples and elderly households need smaller units than households with school age children. Vacant units also serve as a damper to market rents and prices. The 1990 U.S. Census shows a vacancy rate of 3.3 percent (1.6% for single-family units and 1.7% for multi-family units). The County has a vacancy rate of 5.5% (2.1% single-family units and 3.4% multi-family units). If the County vacancy rates are used as benchmarks for

the City of Bell Gardens, the City may need to strive for additional units at 2.2% (0.5% single-family and 1.7% multi-family units). This calculates to an additional 48 single-family units and 163 multi-family units.

### Housing Costs and Rents

The affordability of housing is a major factor in the provision of adequate shelter. In 1970, the median housing value of an owner-occupied home in the City of Bell Gardens was \$18,000 (\$24,300 for the County) and the median contract rent was \$92 (\$110 for the County). Neighboring cities had housing values greater than and less than those in Bell Gardens, but gross rents in Bell Gardens were highest. Table 2-31 shows housing costs and rents for the area in 1970 and 1990.

TABLE 2-31 MEDIAN HOUSING VALUE AND RENTS IN THE AREA (1970 and 1990)				
City	Median Housing Value		Median Contract Rent	
	1970	1990	1970	1990
Downey	\$25,800	\$231,600	\$129	\$602
Pico Rivera	19,600	165,000	114	561
Bell Gardens	18,000	165,200	92	542
Montebello	26,100	213,600	108	574
South Gate	19,400	162,500	93	508
County	24,300	226,400	110	570
Source: 1980 U.S. Census.				

Comparison with the maximum rent that HUD will subsidize for lower income households show that rents in Bell Gardens are lower for all unit types. This could mean that more than half of the housing units in the City are affordable for lower income households and that there are opportunities for residents to use Federal Section

8 rent assistance on housing voucher programs.

### Large Households and Overcrowding

According to the Bureau of the Census, all of the persons who occupy a housing unit, whether or not they are related, are considered to be a "household". The State defines large family



households as those that have over 5 persons. In 1970, the City of Bell Gardens had 11.5% large households (8.0% for the County) and in 1990, the figure increased to 30.9% (9.3% for the County). In 1970, the average household size was 3.1 persons per unit (2.9 for the County). By 1990, the average household size had increased to 4.6 persons per unit (3.0 for the County).

The size of residential units (number of rooms) is an important factor which indicates how adequately the housing stock accommodates the population. The Bureau of the Census

established specific criteria for defining overcrowded and severely overcrowded units: overcrowded units include those where there are more than one person per room living in the unit; and severely overcrowded units are defined as those having 1.5 or more persons per room. In the case of Bell Gardens, 1,714 units (18% of all units) were classified as being overcrowded (1.01 to 1.5 persons per room) and 3,785 units (39.7%) were classified as being severely overcrowded (more than 1.5 persons per room). Over half (57.6%) of the housing units in the City are either overcrowded or severely overcrowded. Table 2-32 summarizes the trends in severely overcrowded units for Bell Gardens compared to surrounding communities.

TABLE 2-32 HOUSEHOLD SIZE TRENDS IN THE REGION: 1970 TO 1990					
City	Units With More Than 1.51 Persons Per Room				
	1970		1990		% Change
	# <sup>1</sup>	% <sup>2</sup>	#	%	
Bell Gardens	499	5.2%	3,785	39.7%	34.5%
South Gate	415	1.8%	6,326	27.6%	25.8%
Downey	274	0.9%	2,044	6.0%	5.1%
Pico Rivera	821	5.6%	2,341	14.3%	8.7%
Montebello	297	2.1%	2,353	12.3%	10.2%
County	67,367	2.7%	373,103	11.8%	9.1%
<sup>1</sup> Number of units. <sup>2</sup> Percent of total units. Sources: 1970 and 1990 U.S. Census.					

The average persons per room for the County is 0.6 persons. The average for Bell Gardens is 1.3 persons per room. Not only has the size of the household increased for the City of Bell Gardens, with 39.7% of the households with 1.5 or more persons, but the average number of rooms per

unit is below the County average. The County has an average of 4.4 rooms per unit. The City of Bell Gardens has an average of 3.4 rooms per unit. So, not only is the household size larger in Bell Gardens, but the housing has less room to accommodate the larger household size.





Another key indicator of the trend towards larger households and the potential overcrowding are census statistics for families. According to the census definition, a family is a household where all of the members are related by blood or marriage. According to the 1990 Census, the average number of persons per family in Bell Gardens was 4.64 persons. The comparable figure for the County as a whole was 3.51 persons. Of the 8,094 families in the City, more than half (54.1%) have five or more members. Over 20% of the families in the City have seven or more members.

### ***Female-headed Households***

In 1970, there were 1,076 female-headed households representing 11.9% of the total households in the City (9.7% for the County). In 1990, there were 23.6% female-headed households (29.6% for the County). Because of limited income and added responsibility, female-headed households present a special housing need. They require affordable housing that are near schools and day care centers.

### ***Minority Households***

The trend toward increasing Hispanic populations in the region has been more pronounced in the residential neighborhoods of Bell Gardens. The majority of households in Bell Gardens are made up of persons with Hispanic origins. There were 1,128 owner households in 1990 and 5,718 renter households who were Hispanic in origin. These represent 12.2 percent and 61.9 percent of the total households, respectively. Minority households consisting of Black, American Indian and Asian households represented 0.4 percent of the total households. Minority households need to be assured equal opportunity to housing in Bell Gardens.

### ***Elderly Households***

Elderly households need housing assistance because they frequently have fixed incomes (social security) which cannot accommodate rent increases or major home repairs. The 1990 Census reported 850 households in Bell Gardens were headed by person 65 years or older. Of the 850 households, 49.2% are owners and 50.8% are renters.

### **Constraints to Housing Production**

#### ***Governmental Constraints***

An analysis of potential and actual government constraints upon the maintenance, improvement or development of housing for all income levels, including land use controls, building codes and their enforcement, site improvements, fees and other exactions required of developers and local processing/permit procedures are provided in this section.

***Land Use Controls:*** The residential land use designations within the City's General Plan Land Use Plan Map are separated into three broad categories ranging from very low to medium density. The following residential densities, which can be achieved under each category, are described as follows:

- ***Very Low Density Residential:*** Includes dwelling units from a base density of 1 dwelling unit per net acre (du/acre) to a maximum of 9 du/acre. Product types at these densities are typically detached single family units and low density attached units.
- ***Low Density Residential:*** Includes dwelling units from a base density of 10 du/acre to a maximum of 16 du/acre. Product types include townhomes and stacked, flat condominium/apartments.



■ **Medium Density Residential:** Includes dwelling units from a base density of 17 du/acre to a maximum of 25 du/acre. Product types include stacked, flat condominium/apartments and mid-rise condominium/apartments. Features to achieve such densities per net acre could include below grade parking or parking structures.

The City of Bell Gardens maintains three residential zoning districts which are intended to provide for a range of housing types and prices. A description of the zones including density factors are listed as follows:

■ **R-1, Single-family Residential Zone:** This designation provides for the development and preservation of residential areas of single-family homes located on moderate to minimum-size lots on relatively flat terrain. Densities within this zone generally range from 1 to 8 units per acre depending upon the characteristics of the development.

■ **R-2, Low Density Residential Zone:** This designation provides for the development and preservation of residential areas of one, two, and three family developments on medium-size lots. Densities within this zone generally range from 1 to 17 units per acre.

■ **R-3, Medium Density Residential Zone:** This designation applies to the development and preservation of single to multiple family developments. Densities within this zone generally range from 1 to 24 units per acre.

**Building Codes and Enforcement:** The City of Bell Gardens has adopted the Uniform Building Code (UBC) which establishes the minimum standards for new construction. While the City may impose more stringent standards, it cannot adopt any which are below those of the UBC. No standards have been adopted above the minimum standards of the UBC.

**Site Improvements:** Future housing production will occur on both vacant and infill recycling sites. The housing unit potential on vacant sites is not constrained by infrastructure; on-site improvements required by the City will be customary. The same is true for infill recycling sites which are located in established neighborhoods.

**Permits and Processing Times and Fees:** When residential projects are initiated in the City, specific approvals are required which involve permits and inspections. Table 2-33 indicates the most common housing applications and attendant permit processing times.

TABLE 2-33 APPROXIMATE DEVELOPMENT PROCESSING TIME	
Process	Time
General Plan Amendment	7-10 weeks
Zone Change	11-13 weeks
EIR's	4-6 months
Tentative Tracts	4-6 weeks
Site Plan Review	3-6 weeks
Variance	3-6 weeks



TABLE 2-33 APPROXIMATE DEVELOPMENT PROCESSING TIME	
Process	Time
Plan Checking/Building Permits	3-6 weeks
Condition Use Permit	4-12 weeks
Note: Processing time commences when applications are accepted. Source: Planning Department, City of Bell Gardens.	

Fees are collected by the City to defray the costs of permit processing, inspections, environmental impact determinations, and other administrative expenses. As land use densities increase, the proportion of the cost borne by each unit decreases for those fees which are charged on a per acre basis.

#### *Non-governmental Constraints*

Nongovernmental constraints, within the context of the housing element legislation, consist of financing, land and construction costs. Usually, these factors are considered market conditions and also may include the prices and rents charged in the marketplace.

**Financing Cost Trends:** A survey was made of mortgage interest rates made available to qualifying borrowers as of June 1988. The rates quoted are on a 30-year, \$168,700 fixed rate mortgage. The eight banks included in the survey quoted rates ranging from a low of 10.163% to a high of 10.55%. The 28 savings and loans covered in the survey quoted rates ranging between 9.98% and 10.61%. When interest rates increase, they can cause substantial increases in the monthly payments required for the same mortgage amount for new homebuyers. For instance, the difference between the monthly payment on a mortgage amount of \$80,000 at a 10% versus 16% interest rate is \$374. This dollar amount differential is on the order of what a current homeowner is spending on mortgage

payments for a house that was bought in the early 1970s for a now modest \$35,000 to \$40,000.

**Land Prices:** Land costs are a major contributor to overall housing production prices. There are a few vacant parcels of significant size and the asking prices of these are unknown. In many areas, the land costs are, in part, associated with the costs of the single-family dwellings now on the sites.

**Construction Costs:** Construction costs include the materials and labor necessary to build the structure. These costs will vary widely depending on the quality features (e.g., size, roofing, carpeting, etc.) which are incorporated in the structure. Because of these factors, it is difficult to establish an absolute measure of construction costs. An enhanced understanding of construction costs impacts is acquired by tracking the relative changes in this production cost category over time.

Trends in single-family construction costs are available for the period of January 1969 to October 1987. During this period the single-family home construction costs have increased nearly three-fold. A home that cost \$50,000 in 1969 would now cost \$135,000. These cost trends, which are monitored by the Marshall and Swift Company, and published quarterly by the Real Estate Research Council of Southern California, are issued with respect to a one-story three-bedroom, two bath, wood frame,





single-family residence with an attached two-car garage. The prototypical single-family residence is 1,570 square feet in size with an attached garage of 447 square feet.

Apartment construction cost trends are available for the period between January 1976 and October 1987. During this time span, the apartment construction costs have more than doubled. An apartment building which in 1976 cost \$410,250 to construct would now cost \$858,400. The prototypical apartment building for the construction cost trends consist of 28 one- and two-bedrooms, laundry room and small lobby. The structure is of average quality and the costs do not include elevator, garages or site improvements.

**Ownership Housing:** The cost of ownership housing has continued to increase throughout the State, particularly in Southern California. Despite lower mortgage interest rates, the seasonal jump in home sales prices reduced the proportion of California households who could afford to purchase the state's median priced home to 31% in March 1988, according to the California Association of Realtors. This is a one percentage point drop from the 32% reported in February 1988.

Compared to March 1987, when 35% of all households throughout the State could afford to purchase the median priced home of \$134,954, the 1988 index is four percentage points lower. Continuing upward pressure on home prices has dramatically reduced affordability even though homebuyers continue to use discounted adjustable rate mortgages in order to ease the burden of monthly mortgage payments. The affordability index for the nation as a whole remained well above California's index in March. Nationally, the percentage of all homebuyers could afford to purchase the nation's median priced home of

\$88,700 remained unchanged from the 49% reported in February 1988.

### Inventory of Land Suitable for Residential Development

In October 1987, an interpretation of the State Attorney General added insight on how Councils of Government such as SCAG, must determine a locality's share of regional housing need. The question posed to the Attorney General by Senator Roberti was as follows:

Must the availability of suitable housing sites be considered based upon the existing zoning ordinances and land use restrictions of the locality or based upon the potential for increased residential development under alternative zoning ordinances and land use restrictions (emphasis added).

The Attorney General's opinion \* in regard to this important question is as follows:

*"We find no indication in Section 65584 that current zoning ordinances and land use restrictions are to limit the factor of "the availability of suitable sites." A housing site would be unsuitable based upon its physical characteristics, not because of some governmental control of an artificial and external nature. The planning process of Sections 65583 and 65584 contemplates an identification of adequate sites that could be made available through different policies and development standards. Existing zoning policies would be only one aspect of the "available data" upon which the factor of the "the availability of suitable sites" is to be considered under Section 65584.*

*...We conclude that a council of governments must consider the availability of suitable housing sites based not only upon the existing zoning ordinances and land use restrictions of the locality*



but also based upon the potential for increased residential development under alternative zoning ordinances and land use restrictions when determining a locality's share of the regional housing needs."

Opinion of John K. Van De Kamp,  
No.87-206, September 29, 1987.

vacant land within the community suitable for residential use. As of July 1991 (date of aerial photographs), 2.1% of the City's 2.39 square miles are vacant (2.6% if street acreage is excluded from the calculations). Table 2-34 summarizes the vacant land acreages according to each lots General Plan and Zoning designation.

### Vacant Land

The production of new housing units in Bell Gardens is somewhat constrained by the lack of

TABLE 2-34 VACANT LOTS				
General Plan Land Use Designation	Site #	Location	Acres	Zone
Very Low Density Residential (0.37 total acres)	1	West side of Jaboneria, at Fostoria	0.37	P-1
Low Density Residential (2.69 total acres)	2	SE corner of Jaboneria and Agra	0.24	R-2
	3	SW corner of Foster Bridge and Grange	0.28	R-2
	4	SE corner of Foster Bridge and Grange	0.06	R-2
	5	West side of Perry, at Alvina	0.21	R-2
	6	East side of Scout, south of Hannon	0.11	R-2
	7	South side of Live Oak, west of Ira	0.23	R-2
	8	North side of Quinn, east of Bell Gardens Avenue	0.83	R-2
	9	North end of Bell Gardens Avenue	0.09	R-2
	10	South side of Clara, west of Eastern	0.48	R-2
	11	North side of Cecilia, east of Eastern	0.16	R-2
Medium Density Residential (5.16 total acres)	12	North side of Foster Bridge, west of Perry	0.17	R-3
	13	SW corner of Gage and Greenwood	4.30	R-3
	14	South side of Clara, east of Eastern	0.34	R-3
	15	SW corner of Jaboneria and Clara	0.17	R-3
	16	North side of Foster Bridge, at Gage intersection	0.18	C-1





*Section 2: Housing Element (continued)*

**TABLE 2-34  
VACANT LOTS**

General Plan Land Use Designation	Site #	Location	Acres	Zone
Central Business District (6.24 total acres)	17	NW corner of Loveland and Sprecht	2.07	R-1 PUD
	18	Between Priory and Clara, at the 710 Freeway	3.72	R-1 PUD
	19	West side of Eastern, south of Loveland	0.22	C-2
	20	NW corner of Florence and Eastern	0.23	C-2
General Commercial (1.37 total acres)	21	SW corner of Garfield and Shull	0.19	C-1
	22	North side of Florence Place, west of Garfield	0.15	C-2
	23	Between Live Oak and Fry, next to Bell Gardens Middle School	1.03	P-1
Office and Professional (4.13 total acres)	24	West side of Garfield, across from the Civic Center	4.13	
Industrial (10.24 total acres)	25	West side of Garfield, north of Loveland	0.46	M-1
	26	East side of Garfield, north of Loveland	0.55	M-1
	27	South side of Suva, east of Suva Elementary School	1.93	M-1
	28	SW corner of Florence Avenue and Scout	0.17	M-1
	29	South side of Florence Avenue, west of Emil	0.14	M-1
	30	West side of Perry, north of Clara	0.14	M-1
	31	East side of Scout, north of Shull	0.07	M-1
	32	South side of Shull, along the Rio Hondo Channel	1.03	M-1
	33	South side of Clara, east of Gephardt	0.17	M-1
	34	South side of Shull, at the 710 Freeway	2.87	M-1
	35	SW corner of Ira and Clara	0.09	M-1
	36	North side of Clara, east of Gephardt	0.24	M-1
	37	East side of Scout, at Clara	0.14	M-1
	38	East side of Garfield, north of Shull	0.17	M-1
	39	South side of Gage, west of Garfield	2.07	M-1 HPD
Source: David Evans and Associates, Inc., 1993.				



Of the 30.20 acres of vacant land, 8.22 acres have a residential General Plan Land Use designation of Very Low Density, Low Density, or Medium Density. The remaining 21.98 acres are designated commercial or industrial. There are also two large vacant areas (2.07 acres and 3.72 acres) designated as Central Business District, but zoned R-1 PUD and located within residential areas. This would bring the total

available vacant land suitable for residential development to 14.01 acres.

Table 2-35 separates the 14.01 acres of vacant land suitable for residential development and estimates potential number of units for these sites under their respective General Plan designations and Zoning designations.

**TABLE 2-35  
ESTIMATES FOR POTENTIAL UNITS**

Site #	Location	Acres	General Plan		Zoning	
			Designation	Potential Units	Designation	Potential Units
1	West side of Jaboneria, at Fostoria	0.37	Very Low	3	P-1	3
2	SE corner of Jaboneria and Agra	0.24	Low	3	R-2	4
3	SW corner of Foster Bridge and Orange	0.28	Low	4	R-2	4
4	SE corner of Foster Bridge and Orange	0.06	Low	0	R-2	1
5	West side of Perry, at Alvina	0.21	Low	3	R-2	3
6	East side of Scott, south of Hannon	0.11	Low	1	R-2	2
7	South side of Live Oak, west of Ira	0.23	Low	3	R-2	4
8	North side of Quinn, east of Bell Gardens Avenue	0.83	Low	13	R-2	14
9	North end of Bell Gardens Avenue	0.09	Low	1	R-2	1
10	South side of Clara, west of Eastern	0.48	Low	7	R-2	8
11	North side of Cecilia, east of Eastern	0.16	Low	2	R-2	2
12	North side of Foster Bridge, west of Perry	0.17	Medium	4	R-3	3
13	SW corner of Gage and Greenwood	4.30	Medium	107	R-3	107
14	South side of Clara, east of Eastern	0.34	Medium	8	R-3	7
15	SW corner of Jaboneria and Clara	0.17	Medium	4	R-3	2
16	North side of Foster Bridge, at Gage intersection	0.18	Medium	4	C-1	3
17	NW corner of Loveland and Sprecht	2.07	CBD	18	R-1 PUD	18



**TABLE 2-35  
ESTIMATES FOR POTENTIAL UNITS**

Site #	Location	Acres	General Plan		Zoning	
			Designation	Potential Units	Designation	Potential Units
18	Between Priory and Clara, at the 710 Freeway	3.72	CBD	33	R-1 PUD	32
<b>Totals</b>			218		218	

Source: David Evans and Associates, Inc., 1993.

There is a potential for 218 units (under current General Plan and Zoning designations) to be constructed on existing vacant lots within the City. However, due to development requirements and minimum lot sizes, this number will likely be less.

### ***Recyclable Land***

Approximately 44% of the City is zoned for residential development with 38% of the City as multi-family zoning. Multi-family zones usually produce most of the recycled units within a City. Bell Gardens' buildout potential for residential units, according to existing General Plan designation, is summarized in Table 2-36.

**TABLE 2-36  
RESIDENTIAL BUILDOUT PROJECTIONS**

General Plan Land Use Designation	Density (dwelling units per acre)	Acres	Buildout (dwelling units)	Buildout (population)
Very Low Density Residential	9	76.5	688	3,027
Low Density Residential	16	445.2	7,123	31,341
Medium Density Residential	25	144.1	3,602	15,848
<b>Totals</b>		<b>664.8</b>	<b>11,413</b>	<b>50,216</b>

Note: Population buildout is based on the 1990 U.S. Census figure of 4.4 persons per unit.  
Source: David Evans and Associates, Inc. 1992, and the 1990 General Plan

Table 2-36 illustrates that with the existing General Plan Land Use designations, a buildout of 11,413 units, with an increase in population to 50,216 persons, could be expected. This is an increase of 1,867 units and 7,861 persons from

the 1990 U.S. Census figures of 9,546 units and 42,355 persons.

If an assumption is made that the growth rate for the City of Bell Gardens will remain the same for the next few years (at 2.4% per year), population





buildout could occur by mid-1997. To accommodate this population buildout, and assuming a constant of 4.4 persons per unit, these 1,867 new units would need to be built in the City by 1997. This is a 20% increase of the existing housing stock. Historically, the City of Bell Gardens' housing supply has not met its demand and the housing supply has, during the 1980s, decreased. In 1980, there were 9,761 units in the City compared to 9,546 in 1990. The City experienced a net loss of 215 units during a period in which the population grew by 8,238 persons (24.1%).

### Needs Assessment

California housing law requires regional planning agencies to identify "existing" and "future" housing needs every five years. The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is the regional planning agency responsible for estimating the existing and future needs numbers for the cities in the six county area of Ventura, Los Angeles, San Bernardino, Riverside, Orange and Imperial Counties. In 1983, the needs figures were contained in a report known as the Regional Housing Allocation Model (RHAM). In 1988, the same planning report was re-named the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA).

### Existing Need

"Existing Need" is defined as the number of lower income households currently overpaying for housing; that is, expending 30% or more of income on housing costs (lower income households are defined and summarized on page 2-28 of this Housing Profile Report). According to the RHNA, there are 3,078 lower income households paying 30% or more of their income on housing costs. This number equals approximately 33% of Bell Gardens' total households.

### Future Need

"Future Need" is defined as the number of additional housing units by income level that will have to be added to each jurisdiction's housing stock from July 1, 1989 to June 30, 1994, in order to:

- Accommodate household growth
- Compensate for demolitions and other inventory losses
- Achieve a 1994 vacancy rate that will allow the market to operate efficiently.

Under Section 65584(a) of the California Government Code, regional planning agencies are responsible for determining projected housing needs for all income levels. The projected housing needs must take into consideration the following factors:

- Market demand for housing
- Employment opportunities
- Availability of suitable sites
- Availability of public facilities
- Commuting patterns
- Type and tenure of housing needs
- Housing needs of farm workers

In addition, the distribution of housing needs pursuant to state housing element law, must seek to avoid further "impaction" or concentration of lower income households. Cities with a percentage of lower income households higher than the regional average are called "impacted" jurisdictions. The RHNA deals with the



"avoidance of impactation" criteria by allocating reduced percentages of lower income and increased percentages of middle and upper income units to impacted jurisdictions, while reversing the allocation to non-impacted cities.

State legislation describes the content requirements of local housing elements. According to state housing element legislation, "...a locality's share of the regional housing needs includes that share of the housing needs of persons at all income levels within the area significantly affected by a jurisdiction's general plan...each locality's share shall be determined by the appropriate councils of government consistent with the criteria" set forth

by the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). In determining required needs of each jurisdiction, SCAG states the following:

*"Identification of future need for the higher income levels gives each jurisdiction an estimate of effective demand, or how much demand for housing there will be in the locality as a function of market forces. Future Need at the lower income levels is often largely latent demand, since such income levels, without subsidy or other assistance, are often ineffective in causing housing to be supplied."*

Table 2-37 summarizes the RHNA needs identified for Bell Gardens.

TABLE 2-37 REGIONAL HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT: JANUARY 1988 TO JULY 1994		
Income Level	Number	% Distribution
Very Low	21	16.3%
Low	30	23.3%
Subtotal	51	39.6%
Moderate	37	28.6%
High	41	31.8%
Subtotal	78	60.4%
Total	129	100.0%

As illustrated in Table 2-35 (on page 2-55), an optimistic 218 units may be accommodated on the City's existing vacant lots. These vacant lots could potentially support the RHNA future housing needs designated for Bell Gardens of 129 units. However, as shown in Table 2-36 (page 2-57), at an existing growth rate of 2.4%

annually, the City of Bell Gardens may reach a population of 50,216 persons by mid-1997. In order to maintain the existing 4.4 persons per unit (the County's figure is 2.8 persons per unit), an additional 1,867 units would need to be built. The RHNA future housing needs assessment of 129 units may be part of the 1,867 units.





# City of Bell Gardens GENERAL PLAN

## Section 3 Circulation and Transportation Element



## SECTION 3: CIRCULATION AND TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

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### **INTRODUCTION TO THE CIRCULATION AND TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT**

The Circulation and Transportation Element of the Bell Gardens General Plan focuses on key transportation-related issues that will need to be considered over the life of this General Plan's implementation.

The land use and development patterns within Bell Gardens generally reflect the location, nature, and extent of transportation facilities. For example, the Land Use Element acknowledges the contribution the railroad had on the City's early development. The construction of freeways throughout the region, including the two that traverse the City, has had an even more dramatic and direct impact on the City's land use patterns.

The purpose of a circulation system is to provide a safe, efficient and serviceable transportation framework to facilitate the movement of people and goods within and through the City. The circulation system enables City residents, those working in the City, and visitors to travel within Bell Gardens and to access the regional transportation network. The Circulation Element is a mandatory element that local governments are required to incorporate into the General Plan. The State of California General Plan Guidelines state that:

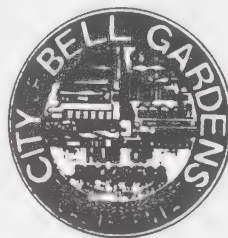
*"The circulation element, required by law since 1935, is not simply a transportation plan. It is actually an infrastructure plan that concerns itself with the circulation of people, goals, energy, water, sewage, storm drainage, and communications. Its provisions support the goals, objectives, policies, and proposals of the land use element. In turn, the land use element is a reflection of community's circulation system and the planning proposals for that system."*

The City of Bell Gardens Circulation and Transportation Element is organized into the following sections:

■ ***Circulation and Transportation Element Policies and Programs.*** Individual policies related to transportation issues and circulation related infrastructure, along with supporting programs, are listed in this section.

■ ***Circulation Plan.*** This section establishes the hierarchy of freeways, highways, and streets within the City and indicates which roadways fall within each category of the hierarchy. Typical standards for each category are also illustrated.

■ ***Circulation and Transportation Element Background Report.*** This section of the Circulation and Transportation Element describes the existing conditions in Bell Gardens related to circulation and transportation.



### **CIRCULATION ELEMENT POLICIES AND PROGRAMS**

Traffic and transportation issues have been a paramount concern to the community. The key points that are an outgrowth of this General Plan effort include the following:



**Issue 1: Over Capacity Conditions on City Streets**

Several street in the City are operating at over capacity conditions. These include: Florence Avenue (west of Eastern and east of Jaboneria), and Clara Street (west of Eastern). The City's Public Works Department is currently undergoing discussions with Caltrans to improve the ramps and signals in the Central Business District area. Although increases in traffic are a regional phenomenon, the City of Bell Gardens is committed to improving circulation.

**Policy 1:** The City of Bell Gardens shall strive to maintain a well-balanced street system, with special emphasis on circulation problems in the downtown area, and seeking innovative and model solutions to local transportation needs.

**Issue 2: Public Transit**

At the community meetings held for input towards this General Plan, the citizens of Bell Gardens expressed concern over the existing public transit system. The City is currently served by buses, trolleys, and a dial-a-ride service. The General Plan meetings identified a need for additional transit stops and a better location for parking the trolley.

**Policy 2:** The City shall encourage the implementation of new and innovative modes of transportation, while striving to provide for the needs of those who require specialized types of service.

**Issue 3: Parking**

The provision of off-street parking presents a significant problem along Eastern Avenue, in other commercial areas of the City, and at Bell Gardens High School. Truck parking on residential streets, and other streets, is a major

traffic and environmental concern to the residents of Bell Gardens.

**Policy 3:** The City shall promote the development of off-street parking facilities by encouraging the provision of clustered parking areas at the rear of retail establishments and the enforcement of off-street parking standards. The City shall discourage truck parking on residential streets and other designated streets.

The following programs implement the four policies discussed previously. Table 3-1, at the end of this section, links each program with its corresponding policy.

**Assessment Districts.** The City shall consider the establishment of special assessment districts or the use of redevelopment where necessary for street improvements and the provision of off-street parking.

**Timing:** Early 1995  
**Agency:** Public Works  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Caltrans Coordination.** The City will coordinate efforts with Caltrans to modify the present access to or to create a new access point at the Long Beach Freeway.

**Timing:** 1995/Ongoing  
**Agency:** City Traffic Engineer  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Capital Improvement Program.** The City's Capital Improvement Program is a five-year plan of finance mechanisms to make the maintenance, upgrading, and replacement of the City's capital assets top priorities. These projects are revised and ranked on an annual basis and include typically streetscape implementation, upgrading of traffic signals, slurry seal for streets, sidewalk repair, and sewer line upgrades, to name just a





few. The City will continue to implement the CIP.

**Timing:** Ongoing  
**Agency:** Public Works  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Crossing Guards.** The City will continue to implement and modify the crossing guard program in coordination with the City's schools. One improvement should include flashing lights at the crossing guard points.

**Timing:** Ongoing  
**Agency:** Community Services  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Funding Efforts.** The City will identify potential projects available for funding through the Transportation Systems Management program offered through the Federal Highway Administration and seek funding for their implementation.

**Timing:** Late 1995  
**Agency:** Public Works  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Handicap Access for Public Transit.** The City will evaluate the feasibility of providing handicap access for the existing public transportation in the City.

**Timing:** Late 1995  
**Agency:** Public Works  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Modify Existing Transit.** The City will evaluate the feasibility to modify routes, schedules, and fares of local public transit service to achieve circulation goals and policies (e.g., coordinate the local transit system with the regional transit system). The City of Bell Gardens will petition MTA for a stop at the City.

**Timing:** Late 1995  
**Agency:** City Traffic Engineer  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Ride-Share.** The City will evaluate the feasibility to institute car and van pooling for public employees and encourage similar programs for private businesses and industries.

**Timing:** Early 1995  
**Agency:** Community Services  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Safety of Police Enforcement Vehicles.** The Police Department shall adopt a policy to not obstruct traffic on any street when ticketing traffic violators or parked vehicles.

**Timing:** Immediate  
**Agency:** Police Department  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Signalization.** The City will strive to provide optimum signalization on major thoroughfares to maximize circulation efficiency, such as participation in a regional signalization program. The City will also continue to pursue signalized pedestrian crosswalks.

**Timing:** Late 1995  
**Agency:** City Traffic Engineer  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Transit Centers.** The Land Use Plan calls for the intensification of development in a number of key areas of the City. Transit centers consisting of bus turnouts and loading areas, weatherproof shelters, information center, emergency phones, and in some areas, park and ride facilities will be expanded as part of this future development.

**Timing:** As needed  
**Agency:** City Traffic Engineer  
**Funding:** General Fund



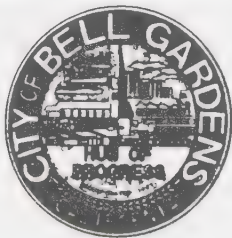
**Truck Parking.** The City will actively enforce regulations prohibiting the parking of trucks on certain streets. The City will also review such existing regulations.

The City will adopt an ordinance that will prohibit truck parking along Gage and Florence Avenues and restrict truck parking on all streets.

**Timing:** Late 1995  
**Agency:** City Traffic Engineer  
**Funding:** General Fund

**TABLE 3-1  
CIRCULATION AND TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT POLICIES AND PROGRAMS MATRIX**

Policies	Programs
<i>Policy 1: The City of Bell Gardens shall strive to maintain a well balanced street system, with special emphasis on circulation problems in the downtown area, by continuing participation in the federal Transportation Systems Management program and seeking innovative and model solutions to local transportation needs.</i>	Capital Improvement Program Funding Efforts Caltrans Coordination Ride-Share Signalization
<i>Policy 2: The City shall encourage the implementation of new and innovative modes of transportation, while striving to provide for the needs of those who require specialized types of service.</i>	Crossing Guards Funding Efforts Handicaps Access for Public Transit Transit Centers Ride-Share
<i>Policy 3: The City shall encourage the development of off-street parking facilities and clustered parking areas at the rear of retail establishments, along with the enforcement of off-street parking standards.</i>	Assessment Districts Transit Centers Truck Parking



## **CIRCULATION AND TRANSPORTATION BACKGROUND REPORT**

The Circulation and Transportation Background Report provides an overview of the City's existing circulation system, existing conditions, public transit, and the congestion management program. This Background Report also provides

a needs assessment and an overview of opportunities.

The City of Bell Gardens has an established system of streets and highways which are likely to remain over the life of the General Plan. Bell Gardens is currently served by a system of major highways, secondary highways, collector streets





and local streets. Exhibit 3-1 illustrates the existing circulation system within the City of Bell Gardens. Cities generally use these classifications of roadways which are determined according to function, design, and traffic load capacity. These classifications may vary somewhat from city to city. This classification system also includes specific design standards, right-of-way widths, pavement widths, number of lanes, and other improvements (see Exhibit 3-2). The existing roadways within, or near, the City of Bell Gardens, are discussed below.

### **Freeways**

The City of Bell Gardens is served by two freeways which provide access to the regional system of interstate and state freeways. The Long Beach Freeway and the Santa Ana Freeway, are located to the west and east of the City, respectively.

**Long Beach Freeway (Interstate 710):** The I-710 acts as the westerly boundary of the City, running in a north-south direction. To the north, the I-710 provides access to the City of Los Angeles and the northwest San Gabriel Valley and direct access to the San Bernardino Freeway (I-10), the Pomona Freeway (SR-60), and the Santa Ana Freeway (I-5). To the south, the I-710 provides access to the City of Long Beach and south Los Angeles County and direct access to the Artesia Freeway (SR-91), the San Diego Freeway (I-405), and Pacific Coast Highway (SR-1). Within the City of Bell Gardens, access to the I-710 is provided by a full interchange at Florence Avenue.

The current traffic volumes on the I-710 are: (1) between Atlantic Boulevard and Florence Avenue-

203,000 average daily trips (ADT); and (2) between Florence Avenue and Firestone Boulevard - 204,000 ADT.

**Santa Ana Freeway (Interstate 5):** Access to and from the I-5 Freeway (which runs in a northwest-southeast direction) is provided by an interchange at the east end of Gage Avenue, just past the City boundary, in the City of Commerce. To the northwest, the I-5 provides access to the City of Los Angeles and beyond through Oregon. To the southeast, the I-5 provides access through Los Angeles, Orange and San Diego Counties. Because the I-5 traverses the entire State of California, direct access is provided to most other interstate freeways.

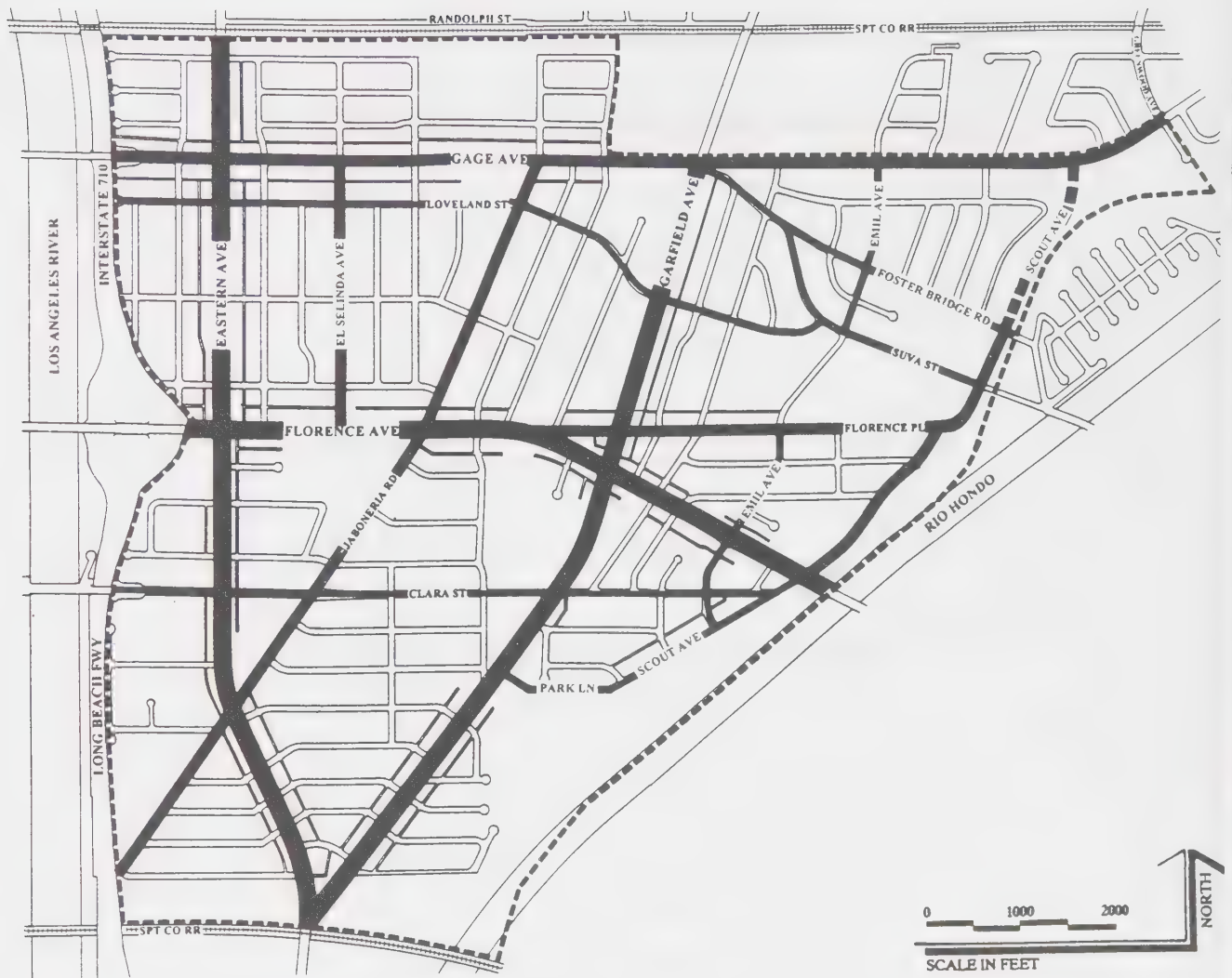
The current traffic volumes of the I-5 are: (1) between Garfield Avenue and Slauson Avenue - 222,000 ADT; and (2) between Slauson Avenue and Paramount Boulevard - 236,000 ADT.





### **Major Highways**

Major highways are designed to move large volumes of traffic through the community to freeways, other major highways, or secondary highways. This roadway classification applies to the main traffic routes through the City which permit through traffic to flow in and out of the City with the least possible effect on local traffic and abutting land uses. These roadways are multi-lane facilities with through traffic comprising the bulk of the traffic volumes. The following are the major highways within the City of Bell Gardens.

**Eastern Avenue:** Eastern Avenue is a north-south roadway that runs parallel with the I-710. Eastern Avenue is a four-lane divided roadway with limited on-street parking. The posted speed limit is 35 MPH. South of Lubec Street, Eastern





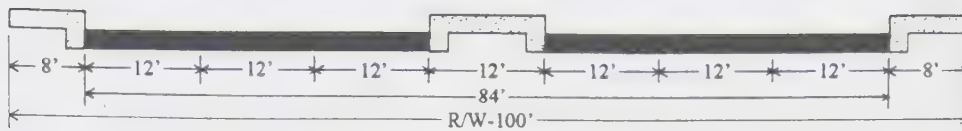
-  Major Highway
-  Secondary Highway
-  Collector Street
-  Proposed Street

SOURCE: Weston Pringle & Associates

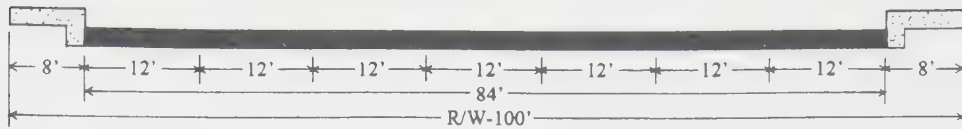
## EXHIBIT 3-1 EXISTING CIRCULATION SYSTEM



## Major Highways

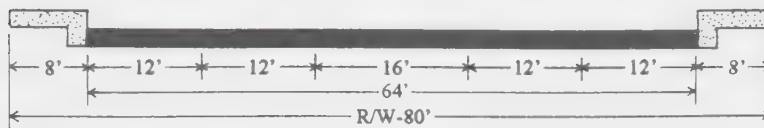


SIX-LANE DIVIDED WITHOUT PARKING  
(Optional Curb Parking)

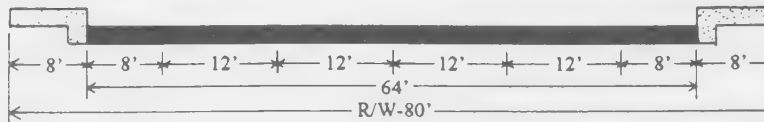


SIX-LANE WITH MIDBLOCK LEFT TURN CHANNELIZATION  
(Optional Curb Parking)

## Secondary Streets

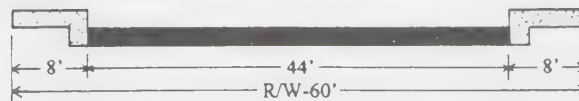


FOUR-LANE WITH MIDBLOCK LEFT TURN CHANNELIZATION

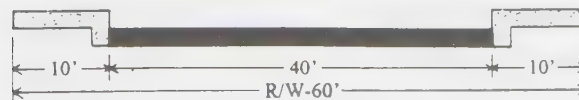


FOUR-LANE WITH PARKING

## Collector Streets



TWO-LANE WITH PARKING FOR INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL AREAS



TWO-LANE WITH PARKING FOR RESIDENTIAL AREAS

## EXHIBIT 3-2 EXISTING ROADWAY STANDARDS





Avenue provides three lanes in the southbound direction. South of Clara Street, Eastern Avenue becomes a four-lane undivided roadway, but this section (to Garfield Avenue) has recently been approved for design improvements. At its southern terminus, Eastern Avenue merges with Garfield Avenue.

**Garfield Avenue:** Garfield Avenue runs in a north-south direction. This four-lane divided roadway with landscaped medians and has on-street parking for limited hours. There is a posted speed limit of 35 MPH.

**Florence Avenue:** Florence Avenue, which runs in an east-west alignment, provides direct access to the I-710. The roadway contains six travel lanes along with a raised landscaped median with left turn pockets. Florence Avenue allows on-street parking during restricted periods. The posted speed limit is 35 MPH. Florence Avenue splits just west of Garfield Avenue, and turns southwest.

### **Secondary Highways**

Secondary Highways are designed to move traffic from collector streets to major highways. They keep through traffic off the local streets and out of residential areas. Secondary highways serve the same general purpose as Major Highways, but to a lesser degree. The following roadways are considered to be Secondary Highways.

**Gage Avenue** - Gage Avenue is an east-west, four-lane undivided roadway. There is a posted speed limit of 35 MPH. Limited on-street parking is provided. Gage Avenue, just east of the City limits, provides direct freeway access to the I-5 for vehicles traveling southbound. Recent upgrades on Gage Avenue include left turn lanes at Emil and Chalet with signals provided from Darwell to Greenwood.

**Florence Place** - Florence Place is an east-west roadway that is an extension of Florence Avenue (where Florence Avenue turns southwest, just west of Garfield Avenue). This is a four-lane undivided roadway with a posted speed limit of 30 and 35 MPH. On-street parking is permitted intermittently.

**Jaboneria Road and El Selinda Avenue** - Jaboneria Road and El Selinda Avenue are both two-lane undivided roadways. The streets serve residential areas with on-street parking permitted. There is a posted speed limit of 30 MPH, except in school zones where a 25 MPH speed limit is posted.

### **Collector Streets**

Collector Streets are designed to carry traffic from the Major and Secondary Highways to the Local Streets of the City. Bell Gardens has six Collector Streets: Clara Street, Park Lane/Scout Avenue, Suva Street, Foster Bridge Boulevard, Emil Avenue, and Loveland Street.

**Clara Street** - Clara Street is a two-lane undivided roadway with a posted speed limit of 30 MPH. This east-west roadway is a residential street with some commercial uses.

**Park Lane/Scout Avenue** - Park Lane/Scout Avenue is considered a collector street south of Florence Avenue and a secondary highway north of Florence Avenue. Park Lane at the southern end runs in an east-west alignment. It turns into Scout Avenue at Gilliland, bending at Gotham and the alignment then changes to a north-south direction at Clara Street. This street is a two-lane undivided roadway with a 30 MPH speed limit. Scout Avenue provides a two-way left turn lane for both residential and commercial uses.

**Suva Street** - Suva Street is a two-lane undivided roadway. A 25 MPH speed limit is posted near



the school and is enforced during school hours. On-street parking is permitted.

**Foster Bridge Boulevard, Emil Avenue, and Loveland Street** - Foster Bridge Boulevard, Emil Avenue and Loveland Street are two-lane undivided roadways. The streets serve residential areas with on-street parking permitted. There is a posted speed limit of 30 MPH, except in school zones where a 25 MPH speed limit is posted.

### Local Streets

Local Streets provide direct access to individual (typically residential) parcels. Local streets usually have one travel lane in each direction with on-street parking permitted on both sides of the street. The majority of the streets in Bell Gardens are local streets with widths ranging from 40 to 60 feet.

## LEVEL OF SERVICE

The analysis of the existing traffic and circulation conditions on the City of Bell Gardens consists of two components: (1) Average Daily Traffic Volumes (ADT); and (2) Levels of Service (LOS). These two components are discussed below.

### Average Daily Traffic Volumes (ADT)

The first step in analyzing existing traffic conditions is to determine roadway capacity values. Various methodologies and parameters are used in analyzing ADTs and it should be noted that ADTs represent only general indicators of roadway operations.

ADTs for 1990 and existing roadway capacity values were provided by the City of Bell Gardens Public Works Department. These adjusted ADTs, along with their respective design capacities, are shown on Table 3-2. Exhibit 3-3 illustrates these daily traffic volumes for 1990.

TABLE 3-2 AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC VOLUMES AND ROADWAY DESIGN CAPACITIES		
Street	ADT	Roadway Design Capacity
<b>Eastern Avenue</b>		
north of Gage Avenue	20,200	33,000
north of Florence Avenue	22,300	33,000
south of Florence Avenue	31,200	33,000
north of Clara Street	23,000	33,000
north of Garfield Avenue	18,400	22,000
<b>Garfield Avenue</b>		
north of Florence Avenue	24,600	33,000
south of Florence Avenue	16,900	33,000
north of Garfield/Eastern	18,100	33,000





<b>TABLE 3-2</b> <b>AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC VOLUMES AND ROADWAY DESIGN CAPACITIES</b> <b>(continued)</b>		
Street	ADT	Roadway Design Capacity
<b>Florence Avenue</b>		
west of Eastern Avenue <sup>2</sup>	67,400	33,000
west of Jaboneria Road <sup>3</sup>	35,500	49,500
east of Jaboneria Road <sup>3</sup>	38,900	49,500
east of Garfield Avenue <sup>3</sup>	29,700	49,500
<b>Gage Avenue</b>		
east of Eastern Avenue	21,900	22,000
west of Eastern Avenue	24,000	22,000
east of Jaboneria Road	23,000	22,000
east of Garfield Avenue	20,900	22,000
west of Greenwood Avenue	20,000	22,000
<b>Florence Place</b>		
east of Garfield Avenue	6,100	22,000
west of Scout Avenue	3,800	22,000
<b>Jaboneria Road</b>		
south of Gage Avenue	6,400	12,500
north of Clara Street	8,600	12,500
<b>Scout Avenue</b>		
north of Florence Avenue	5,700	12,500
south of Florence Avenue	2,900	12,500
<b>Clara Street</b>		
west of Eastern Avenue	18,900	12,500
east of Eastern Avenue	10,600	12,500
east of Garfield Avenue	7,900	12,500
Source: Weston Pringle and Associates, 1992.		

As shown in Table 3-2, three of the eight streets analyzed have overcapacity conditions at some portions of their roadway length within the City of Bell Gardens. Florence Avenue, west of Eastern; Gage Avenue, west of Eastern and east of Jaboneria; and Clara Street, west of Eastern; are the road segments that are overcapacity.

While daily traffic volumes provide a general indication of operations, the actual operations of the roadway system are constrained by the flow of traffic through intersections. In some cases, ADTs may indicate that a roadway section is operating within acceptable intersection levels of service.







To assess the operational characteristics of intersections, the turning movement volumes for each intersection are examined to determine the volume to capacity ratio (V/C) for each turn movement. The V/C ratio is simply the ratio of the existing traffic volumes to the roadway's

capacity. While Table 3-2 indicated the ADTs and roadway design capacity, Table 3-3 summarizes the V/C ratio for these same roadways by dividing the ADTs in Table 3-2 by the Roadway Design Capacity.

TABLE 3-3 VOLUME TO CAPACITY RATIOS	
Street	Volume to Capacity Ratio (V/C)
<b>Eastern Avenue</b>	
north of Gage Avenue	0.61
north of Florence Avenue	0.68
south of Florence Avenue	0.95
north of Clara Street	0.70
north of Garfield Avenue	0.84
<b>Garfield Avenue</b>	
north of Florence Avenue	0.75
south of Florence Avenue	0.51
north of Garfield/Eastern	0.55
<b>Florence Avenue</b>	
west of Eastern Avenue <sup>1</sup>	2.04
west of Jaboneria Road <sup>2</sup>	0.72
east of Jaboneria Road <sup>2</sup>	0.79
east of Garfield Avenue <sup>2</sup>	0.60
<b>Gage Avenue</b>	
east of Eastern Avenue	1.00
west of Eastern Avenue	1.09
east of Jaboneria Road	1.05
east of Garfield Avenue	0.95
west of Greenwood Avenue	0.91
<b>Florence Place</b>	
east of Garfield Avenue	0.28
west of Scout Avenue	0.17
<b>Jaboneria Road</b>	
south of Gage Avenue	0.51
north of Clara Street	0.69
<b>Scout Avenue</b>	
north of Florence Avenue	0.46
south of Florence Avenue	0.23





TABLE 3-3 VOLUME TO CAPACITY RATIOS (continued)	
Street	Volume to Capacity Ratio (V/C)
Clara Street	
west of Eastern Avenue	1.51
east of Eastern Avenue	0.85
east of Garfield Avenue	0.63
<sup>1</sup> Although this section is classified as four lanes divided, there are extra lanes leading to the freeway ramps that may add to the capacity of the roadway, therefore the V/C ratio on this specific roadway segment may be lower. <sup>2</sup> The six lane divided roadway on Florence Avenue is provided during the peak hours. Source: Weston Pringle and Associates, 1992.	

Level of Service (LOS) is used to describe quality of traffic flow. The LOS is categorized A through F and is related to the V/C ratios. The lowest V/C ratio being a LOS A and the highest V/C ratio being LOS F. LOS A to C; indicate acceptable operating conditions. LOS D is typically the LOS for which an urban street is designed. LOS E is the maximum volume a

facility can accommodate and could result in momentary stoppages. LOS F occurs when a facility is overloaded and is characterized by stop-and-go traffic with stoppages of long duration. Table 3-4 summarizes the relationship of LOS to V/C ratios and Exhibit 3-4 illustrates the various LOS levels.

TABLE 3-4 SUMMARY OF LEVELS OF SERVICE (RELATED TO V/C RATIOS)		
LEVEL OF SERVICE	DESCRIPTION	V/C RATIO
A	Low volumes; primarily free flow operations; density is low and vehicles can freely maneuver within the traffic stream; drivers can maintain their desired speeds with little or no delay.	0.00 - 0.60
B	Stable flow with potential for some restrictions of operating speeds due to traffic conditions; maneuvering is only slightly restricted; the stopped delays are not bothersome and drivers are not subject to appreciable tension.	0.61 - 0.70
C	Stable operations; the ability to maneuver is more restricted by the increase in traffic volumes; relatively satisfactory operating speeds prevail, but adverse signed coordination or longer queues cause delays.	0.71 - 0.80



TABLE 3-4 SUMMARY OF LEVELS OF SERVICE (RELATED TO V/C RATIOS) (continued)		
LEVEL OF SERVICE	DESCRIPTION	V/C RATIO
D	Approaching unstable traffic flow where small increases in volume could cause substantial delays; most drivers are restricted in their ability to maneuver and their selection of travel speeds; comfort and convenience are low, but tolerable.	0.81 - 0.90
E	Operations characterized by significant approach delays and average travel speeds of one-half to one-third the free flow speed; flow is unstable and potential for stoppages of brief duration; high signal density, extensive queuing, or signal progression/timing are the typical causes of the delays.	0.91 - 1.00
F	Forced flow operations with high approach delays at critical signalized intersections; speeds are reduced substantially and stoppages may occur for short or long periods of time because of downstream congestion.	Not Meaningful
Source: Highway Capacity Manual, Special Report 209, Transportation Research Board, 1985.		

Table 3-5 summarizes the relation of LOS to V/C ratios of the streets analyzed in Tables 3-2 and 3-3.

TABLE 3-5 LOS RELATION TO V/C RATIOS		
STREET	V/C	LOS
<b>Eastern Avenue</b>		
north of Gage Avenue	0.61	B
north of Florence Avenue	0.68	B
south of Florence Avenue	0.95	E
north of Clara Street	0.70	B
north of Garfield Avenue	0.84	D
<b>Garfield Avenue</b>		
north of Florence Avenue	0.75	C
south of Florence Avenue	0.51	A
north of Garfield/Eastern	0.55	A
<b>Florence Avenue</b>		
west of Eastern Avenue <sup>2</sup>	2.04	F
west of Jaboneria Road <sup>3</sup>	0.72	C
east of Jaboneria Road <sup>3</sup>	0.79	C
east of Garfield Avenue <sup>3</sup>	0.60	A





TABLE 3-5 LOS RELATION TO V/C RATIOS (continued)		
STREET	V/C	LOS
<b>Gage Avenue</b>		
east of Eastern Avenue	1.00	E
west of Eastern Avenue	1.09	F
east of Jaboneria Road	1.05	F
east of Garfield Avenue	0.95	E
west of Greenwood Avenue	0.91	E
<b>Florence Place</b>		
east of Garfield Avenue	0.28	A
west of Scout Avenue	0.17	A
<b>Jaboneria Road</b>		
south of Gage Avenue	0.51	A
north of Clara Street	0.69	B
<b>Scout Avenue</b>		
north of Florence Avenue	0.46	A
south of Florence Avenue	0.23	A
<b>Clara Street</b>		
west of Eastern Avenue	1.51	F
east of Eastern Avenue	0.85	D
east of Garfield Avenue	0.63	B
Source: Weston Pringle and Associates, 1992.		

Most road segments on Gage Avenue are presently operating at over capacity. Gage Avenue is currently designated a Secondary Highway, has 4 undivided lanes, and a roadway capacity of 22,000 vehicles per day. Clara Street between the I-710 overpass and Eastern Avenue is currently operating at overcapacity conditions. Four (4) undivided lanes are needed in this section of Clara Street to provide acceptable roadway conditions.

### Public Transit

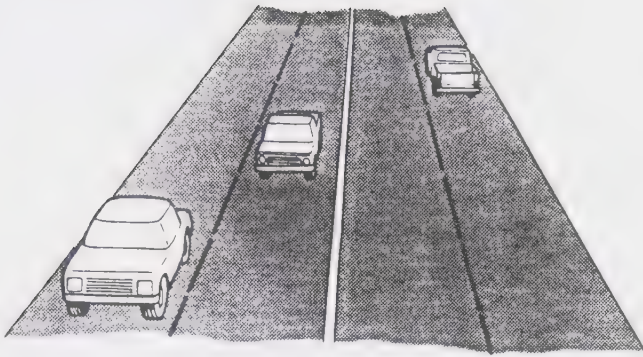
The City of Bell Gardens is served by several public transit services. The Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) has numerous bus lines which serve Bell Gardens. Bus service is provided by the MTA on Eastern Avenue (Line #259),

Garfield Avenue (Line #262), Gage/Slauson Avenue (Line #110), and on Florence Avenue (Line #111). Bus transportation on Eastern and Florence Avenues is provided in approximately 30-minute intervals during daytime hours. Service on Gage/Slauson Avenues ranges from 12-minute intervals during peak hours to 25 minutes during non-peak hour. Exhibit 3-5 illustrates the location of the MTA bus routes.

The City is served by three Town Trolleys which provide local service during the hours of 6:30 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Saturday. There are 44 Trolley stop locations within the City.

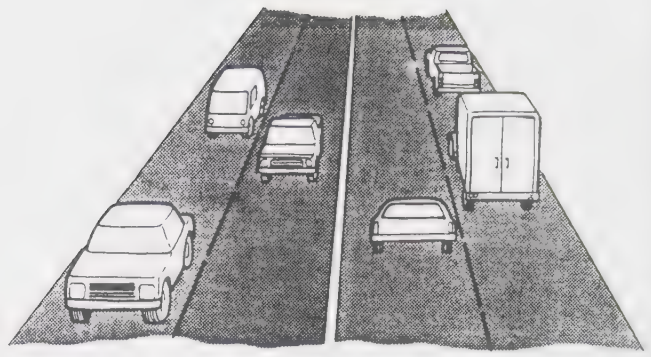
A dial-a-ride service is also provided to the Bell Gardens community. Services are limited within





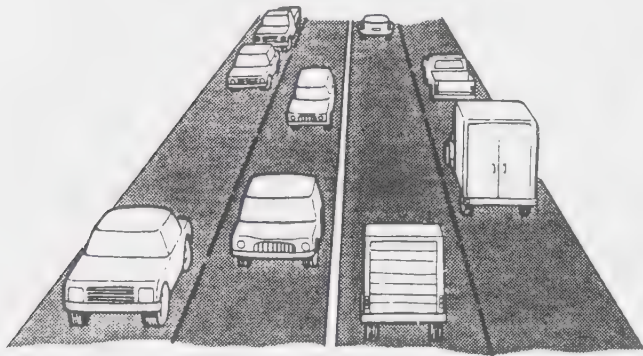
### Level of Service A

Free flow in which there is little or no restriction on speed or maneuverability.



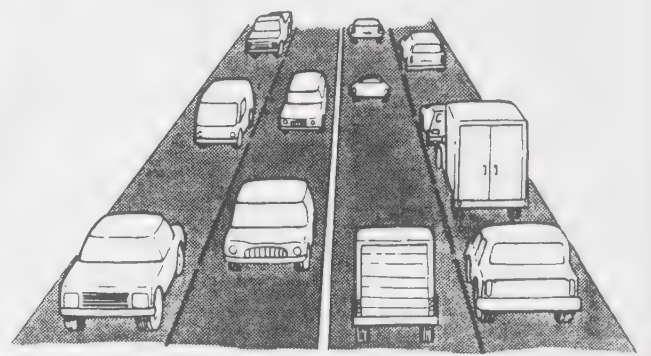
### Level of Service B

Stable flow though operating speed is beginning to be restricted by other traffic.



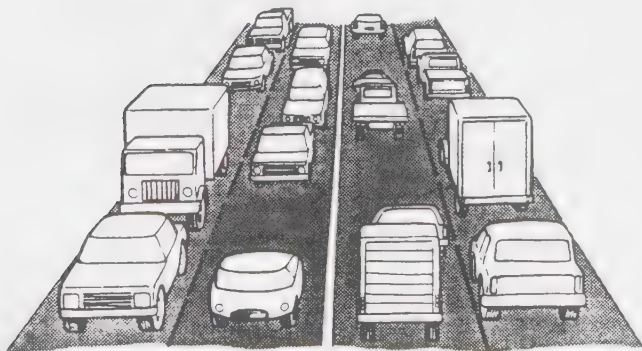
### Level of Service C

Stable flow though drivers are becoming restricted in their freedom to select speed, change lanes or pass.



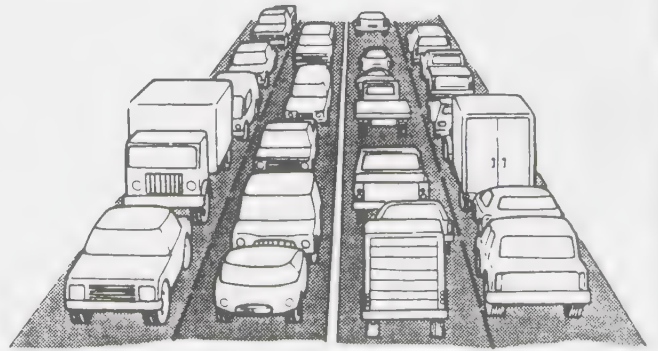
### Level of Service D

Tolerable average operating speeds are maintained but are subject to considerable sudden variation.



### Level of Service E

Speeds and flow rates fluctuate and there is little independence on speed selection or ability to maneuver.



### Level of Service F

Speeds and flow rates are below those attained in Level of Service E and may, for short time periods, drop to zero.

## EXHIBIT 3-4 LEVELS OF SERVICE











the City limits. The dial-a-ride service outside the City limits is provided only to scheduled trips to Rancho Los Amigos Hospital, Downey Social Security Office, and doctor's appointments in the City of Downey and Kaiser Clinic. The service is offered Monday through Friday, 6:30 AM to 9:30 PM and on Saturday from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Three buses operate Monday through Friday and one bus on Saturday.

### ***Railroads***

Two railroads are just outside the southern and northern boundaries of the City. The Pacific Electric Railroad passes along the north periphery of the City; the Southern Pacific Railroad parallels the City limits to the south. Neither of these railroads, however, furnish local service. Freight service for local industrial and business operations are furnished entirely by a number of trucking firms. Train traffic on the two spurs are minimal with only five to seven scheduled trains passing on each track daily.

Metrolink, which is under the jurisdiction of Southern California Regional Rail Authority and is a commuter train service, is proposing to open a station in the Montebello/Commerce area in the near future. This service will provide an alternative form of transportation to the Los Angeles area for citizens of Bell Gardens.

### ***Airports***

The Los Angeles International Airport is located within 15 miles of the City and provides a variety of air transportation services, including freight and passenger services. The Long Beach Municipal Airport is located approximately 12 miles south of the City and provides additional services for local businesses and industries.

### ***Harbors***

One of the world's major harbors is located approximately 15 miles south of Bell Gardens. The Long Beach/Los Angeles Harbors have approximately 46 miles of docking facilities which serve all types of marine shipping for the greater Los Angeles metropolitan area.

### ***Truck Routes and On-Street Parking***

To accommodate the flow of industrial and commercial goods and materials, local truck routes have been designated through the City as depicted in Exhibit 3-6. These routes include: Gage Avenue, Florence Avenue, Garfield Avenue, and that portion of Eastern Avenue north of Gage. On these designated truck routes, travel and parking of trucks between the hours of 2:00 and 4:00 a.m. on any City street requires a special permit. To obtain a truck parking permit, the truck owner must be a Bell Gardens resident and the truck must be parked within 100 feet of their residence in Bell Gardens. The City currently has a Traffic and Safety Commission where violations of this nature, and suggestions, may be heard.

### ***Bicycle Routes***

The City of Bell Gardens currently does not have a bike or trail system nor is one being planned. The City, however, is included in a regional system which follows the Rio Hondo Flood Control Channel. The City plans to continue to support the regional system.

### ***Congestion Management Program***

Proposition 111 requires every urbanized county with a population of 50,000 or more to adopt a Congestion Management Plan (CMP). Gasoline tax revenues for Bell Gardens are subject to compliance with the Los Angeles County CMP









requirements. The Los Angeles County CMP system includes all state highways. Cities are required to maintain a minimum LOS E on the CMP system, unless the roadway was operating at a LOS F when the baseline counts were conducted in 1991.

Currently, there are no CMP state highways within the City boundaries. However, future projects within the City will need to follow the guidelines listed under the CMP Transportation Impact Analysis. The CMP state highways closest to Bell Gardens include, but are not limited to, Rosemead Boulevard, Firestone Boulevard, and Whittier Boulevard. The City is in full compliance with the CMP and has adopted the TDM Ordinance, as well as other CMP requirements.

Proposition 111 also requires development of a trip reduction and travel demand management (TDM) element for the CMP that promotes alternative transportation methods. Examples of these methods include carpools, vanpools, public transit, bicycles, and other strategies such as flexible work hours and parking management. Local jurisdictions are responsible for adopting and implementing a local TDM ordinance (conforming to the state model TDM ordinance) by April 1, 1993.

### *Needs Assessment*

The major congestion problem in the City occurs in the downtown area, which generally includes the areas between Gage Avenue to the north, Clara Street to the south, the I-710 to the west, and the commercial areas along Eastern Avenue and Florence Avenue to the east. The City's Public Works Department is currently undergoing discussions with Caltrans to improve the ramps and traffic signals in this area. There is a proposed signal to be added, but it has not yet been funded.

Eastern Avenue is the main street (north-south) through Bell Gardens' commercial district and intersects with Gage Avenue and Florence Avenue, which provide regional access to the City. Florence, Gage and Garfield Avenues are all designated truck routes through the City. Eastern Avenue, north of Gage, is also a designated truck route.

### *Special Transit Needs*

It is estimated that at least 50% of Bell Gardens' population is either under 15 or over 65 years of age and thus transit-dependent. The existing public transit network is composed of the City's dial-a-ride program, which transports 9,000 persons per month; and the MTA bus service and the Town Trolleys', which transport 28,000 persons per month.

### *Freeway Access*

Bell Gardens' circulation network is impacted by the fact that Florence Avenue comprises the City's only access point to the I-710. This has resulted in heavy traffic on Florence Avenue (67,400 ADT) between the I-710 and Eastern Avenue. As a result of its function as a regional access point to the I-710, Florence Avenue is subject to heavy traffic flows during peak hours.

### *Off-Street Parking*

The provision of off-street parking presents a significant problem along Eastern Avenue, which was originally designed to include on-street angle parking. Since the angled on-street parking was eliminated, there has become a greater need and dependence upon adequate off-street parking to accommodate local businesses.

Parking throughout the City is a major concern of residents. In particular, complaints have been registered regarding lack of adequate parking at



Bell Gardens High School, lack of appropriate parking areas for the Town Trolley, and lack of adequate parking in the City's commercial districts.

#### *Clara Street*

Clara Street is currently designated and improved as a collector street. However, the volume of traffic and industrial uses located on this street between Jaboneria and Garfield Avenues results in traffic loads which exceed the desired capacity of a collector. On-street vehicular parking, truck traffic, and the present level of daily volume are such that its redesignation and improvement to a secondary highway would be appropriate. Absent of such improvements, the City should consider alternative remedial measures such as parking prohibitions on one or both sides, either full time or during specified business hours.

#### *Redevelopment Projects*

Redevelopment in the Central Business District area has begun to solve the off-street and on-

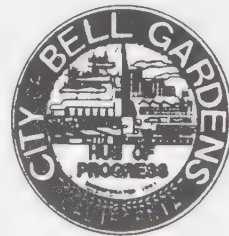
street parking situation on Eastern Avenue. With proper treatment, local merchants can develop adequate parking facilities according to need and demand.

#### *Regional Access*

The City of Bell Gardens has excellent access to surrounding areas in the region from the I-710 and I-5 Freeways. Traffic-oriented uses near the Central Business District would benefit the City significantly due to its regional location and excellent visibility from the I-710.

#### *Adequacy of Developed Circulation Network*

The City of Bell Gardens is fully developed without much vacant land for new development. The circulation system is nearly fully developed and requires some adjustment and modification. The only street shown on the circulation network that has not been constructed is Scout Avenue between Foster Bridge Road and Gage Avenue.





# City of Bell Gardens GENERAL PLAN

## Section 4 Open Space and Recreation Element





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## SECTION 4: OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION ELEMENT

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### **INTRODUCTION TO THE OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION ELEMENT**

The Open Space and Recreation Element of the Bell Gardens General Plan outlines a strategy to preserve remaining open space areas in the City to meet the recreational needs of the community. The majority of open space in Bell Gardens is in the form of city parks and school playgrounds. Other open space includes undeveloped land and areas such as building setbacks, utility easements, and flood control channels. For this reason, open space and recreation issues are addressed together in this Element.

This Element fulfills the requirements of Section 65302(e) and 65560 to 65570 of the California Government Code regarding the preparation of an open space plan for the City. State law indicates that:

*"The preservation of open-space land... is necessary not only for the maintenance of the economy of the state, but also for the assurance of the continued availability of land for the production of food and fiber, for the enjoyment of scenic beauty, for recreation and for the use of natural resources."*

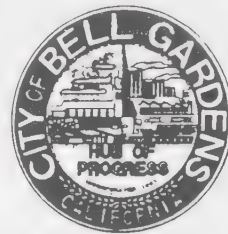
Recreation elements are an optional element of the general plan, as permitted by Section 65303 of the Government Code, but are required in order to implement Park and Recreation in-lieu fee ordinances which provide a fair share prorata portion of funds for parks development when new residential construction occurs.

The Open Space and Recreation Element of the Bell Gardens General Plan has been developed to comply with these state requirements and to establish a long-range program for the preservation of public parks in the City and for the provision of adequate recreation areas and

facilities to serve the needs of residents. The Bell Gardens Open Space and Recreation Element consists of the following sections:

■ ***Open Space and Recreation Element Policies and Programs.*** Individual policies related to open space and recreation issues, along with supporting programs, are listed in this section.

■ ***Open Space and Recreation Element Background Report.*** The Open Space and Recreation Plan Element Background Report describes the existing conditions in the City relative to open space and recreational issues.



### **OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION ELEMENT POLICIES AND PROGRAMS**

The public parks in Bell Gardens are an important resource that must be considered in future planning. The City's five public parks cover a total of just over 16 acres and Ford Park (a County regional park) consists of 48 acres within Bell Gardens. Facilities at these various parks include childrens' play areas, a community center, picnic/BBQ areas, and other minor amenities. Parks serving the City range in size from 0.24 acres to 48 acres and are scattered throughout the City.



With the majority of land in the City already developed and limited opportunities for new park development, the Open Space and Recreation Element for Bell Gardens focuses on the need to preserve and maintain existing open space, parks, and recreational facilities.

The City's adopted Parks and Recreation Master Plan identifies specific issues, needs, and programs for the Bell Gardens community. It is the intent of this Open Space and Recreation Element to compliment and build upon the direction set forth in the Master Plan.

#### ***Issue 1: Existing Open Space***

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) has adopted standards governing minimal acceptable space and facility requirements for the open space and recreation needs of communities based on population ratios (acres of park land per 1,000 people). The standard used for Bell Gardens is 5.25 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. According to the standards, the City of Bell Gardens (with a population of 42,355) would require a park system containing between 222 acres. The City now has a total of just over 64 acres of developed parks (including Ford Park). Taking into account the recreation facilities at the school sites, the total then calculates to under 100 acres. A deficit of at least 122 acres occurs for the Bell Gardens community. The open space and recreation facilities that do exist in the City must be preserved and protected.

***Policy 1: The City of Bell Gardens shall continue to protect and maintain existing open space used for recreation and shall explore opportunities for providing additional park land.***

#### ***Issue 2: Additional Open Space***

The Park and Recreation Master Plan emphasizes the need for additional open space and recreation opportunities in the City (the City has taken over Ford Park from Los Angeles County). Not only is there a 122-acre open space deficit, but recreation facilities also fall far behind those provided in neighboring communities.

***Policy 2: The City of Bell Gardens shall expand existing open space through land acquisition and multi-use corridors, particularly in the northwest of the City.***

#### ***Issue 3: Funding Recreational Services and Facilities***

The City needs to maximize the recreational utility of the City's resources for the benefit of all residents of the community. Land cost and funds targeted for other types of City programs limit the money available for land acquisition and the development of recreational facilities.

***Policy 3: The City of Bell Gardens shall maximize the City's recreational resources through the adoption of a Quimby Act ordinance.***

The City's standards for open space help to promote adequate facilities and ensure that all interests are served. This may include recreational facilities and open space owned by the City, the County of Los Angeles, the school districts, and other private entities. The City should also seek continued and expanded cooperative agreements with Southern California Edison for utilization of portions of their right-of-ways for public parks and open space, in addition to the existing soccer field as called for in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The City should also investigate and coordinate with Los Angeles County to develop plans for





utilization of flood control right-of-way areas next to Ford Park.

The Land Use Element includes a single Open Space/Parks land use designation. The Open Space/Parks designation assumes that land so designated will remain as open space for recreational uses or for purposes of conservation or safety. Areas of the City designated as Open Space/Parks include the City's parks, Ford Park, open space land dedicated as part of development agreements, utility easements, storm drain channels, and freeway rights-of-ways. Approximately 140 acres are designated as Open Space/Parks in the Land Use Element.

The City's Parks and Recreation Specific Plan contains the necessary programs for implementation of this Open Space and Recreation Element.

The following programs are identified with their corresponding policies in Table 4-1, following this section.

**Adopt a Park/Park Watch.** The City will analyze the feasibility of implementing an adopt-a-park program along with a park watch program. Individual neighborhoods become involved with the operation, maintenance and safety of their parks, with assistance from the City. The Police Department shall review all programs to ensure safety and coordination with their programs.

**Timing:** Early 1995  
**Agency:** Parks and Recreation Department  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Gift Catalogues.** The City will analyze the feasibility of preparing and distributing a gift catalogue for specific items the community needs. The catalogue may list services that the City will perform in exchange for a donation.

**Timing:** Late 1996  
**Agency:** Parks and Recreation Department  
**Funding:** Various

**Joint Use Facilities (discussed in the Parks Master Plan).** The City will continue to support existing joint agreements and explore opportunities for expanding joint use agreements to include other schools. The City will continue joint use agreements with City Commerce and Montebello School District.

**Timing:** Ongoing  
**Agency:** Community Development, Parks  
**Funding:** General Fund, Quimby

**New Park Development.** The Parks Master Plan establishes a long-range park development plan identifying desirable park areas and their associated recreational uses and facilities. The Parks Master Plan, together with the Open Space and Recreation Element, will serve as the guide for development of recreational facilities. Periodic review of the Master Plan will facilitate implementation and monitoring of programs. Candidates for new park development and/or acquisition include a new park in the vicinity of Jaboneria and Fosteria and the gradual expansion of Bell Gardens Park. A number of facilities may eventually be constructed; including a sports complex, gym, pool, etc.

**Timing:** In progress  
**Agency:** Parks and Recreation  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Parkway Landscaping.** The City shall continue the program of parkway landscaping and maintenance and include new areas where appropriate.

**Timing:** Ongoing  
**Agency:** Public Works Department  
**Funding:** General Fund



**Quimby Act Ordinance.** The City has set forth the proposed adoption of provisions in the subdivision ordinance for the declaration of land for park use pursuant to Section 66477 of the California Government Code. This provision allows local governments to exact land dedications, in-lieu fees, or a combination of both for park and recreation purposes as a condition of approving a final subdivision or parcel map.

**Timing:** Ongoing

**Agency:** Community Development

**Funding:** General Fund, exactions, dedications

**Railroad Rights-of-Way Participation.** The City shall solicit the cooperation and participation of the railroad companies in the development of existing railroad rights-of-way; particularly those rights-of-way adjacent to public streets, for use as multi-purpose open space areas and for bicycling, jogging, etc.

**Timing:** 1997

**Agency:** Public Works/Engineering Department

**Funding:** General Fund, Redevelopment

**Renovation of Existing Parks.** The City will pursue the development and adoption of land use regulations which protect and renovate existing public open space from encroachment or conversion to other uses, in particular Bell Gardens and Marlow Parks. This new development will comply with the guidelines set forth by the American Disabilities Association (ADA). Renovation shall be reviewed by the Police Department to ensure safety and crime regulations are met.

**Timing:** Late 1995

**Agency:** Community Development

**Funding:** General Fund

**State and Federal Grants.** The City will actively pursue the available grants for local governments, including the Roberti-Z'berg Urban Open Space and Recreation Program, which awards grants to specific projects.

**Timing:** Late 1995

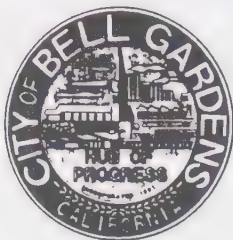
**Agency:** Parks and Recreation Department

**Funding:** Various

TABLE 4-1  
OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION POLICIES AND PROGRAMS MATRIX

Policies	Programs
<i>Policy 1: The City of Bell Gardens shall continue to protect and maintain existing open space used for recreation and shall explore opportunities for providing additional park land.</i>	Adopt-a-Park/Park Watch Joint Use Facilities Renovation of existing Parks
<i>Policy 2: The City of Bell Gardens shall expand existing open space through land acquisition and multi-use corridors, particularly in the northwest of the City.</i>	Parkway Landscaping New Park Development Quimby Act Ordinance Railroad Rights-of-Way Participation
<i>Policy 3: The City of Bell Gardens shall maximize the City's recreational resources through the adoption of a Quimby Act ordinance.</i>	Gift Catalogues State and Federal Grants
Source: David Evans and Associates, Inc., 1994.	





## OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION ELEMENT BACKGROUND REPORT

Vacant land refers to undeveloped privately owned land or publicly owned land left as open space. Open space areas include areas unsuitable for development due to unstable ground conditions, and areas that are undeveloped to comply with existing land use controls for parks, building setback areas, utility easements, and school playing fields.

The City of Bell Gardens is fully urbanized with little undeveloped land remaining. The major open space areas are contained in the five City parks have a combined area of 64.12 acres. Other private open space areas within the City include the Southern California Edison transmission line easement (54.47 acres) and the Los Angeles County Flood Control District (LACFCD) easement (23.90 acres). Vacant parcels consist of 39 sites on approximately 30.2 acres.

### *Parks and Recreation Facilities*

The City of Bell Gardens Recreation Department maintains five City parks, with a combined total of 64.12 acres, and offers a variety of leisure activities and services such as game courts and fields, picnic areas, play lots and community centers. The 48-acre John Anson Ford Park was recently acquired by the City of Bell Gardens.

Available recreational programs offered by the City include youth and adult sports activities, special interest classes, cultural and performing

arts programs, senior citizens activities, and instructional opportunities for special interests. Existing park facilities are detailed below and summarized in Table 4-2. Exhibit 4-1 shows the location and service radii of these parks.

■ **Bell Gardens Park:** Bell Gardens Park is a 15-acre neighborhood park located at the southeast corner of Loveland Street and Perry Road. The park has a Boys and Girls Club, Senior Center, City Department of Parks and Recreation Offices, Cultural Center, auditorium, and park maintenance facility. Amenities include a picnic shelter, picnic tables, bar-b-que grills, benches, concrete walks, open turf areas, play fields, bleachers, play courts, play structures, and sand areas.

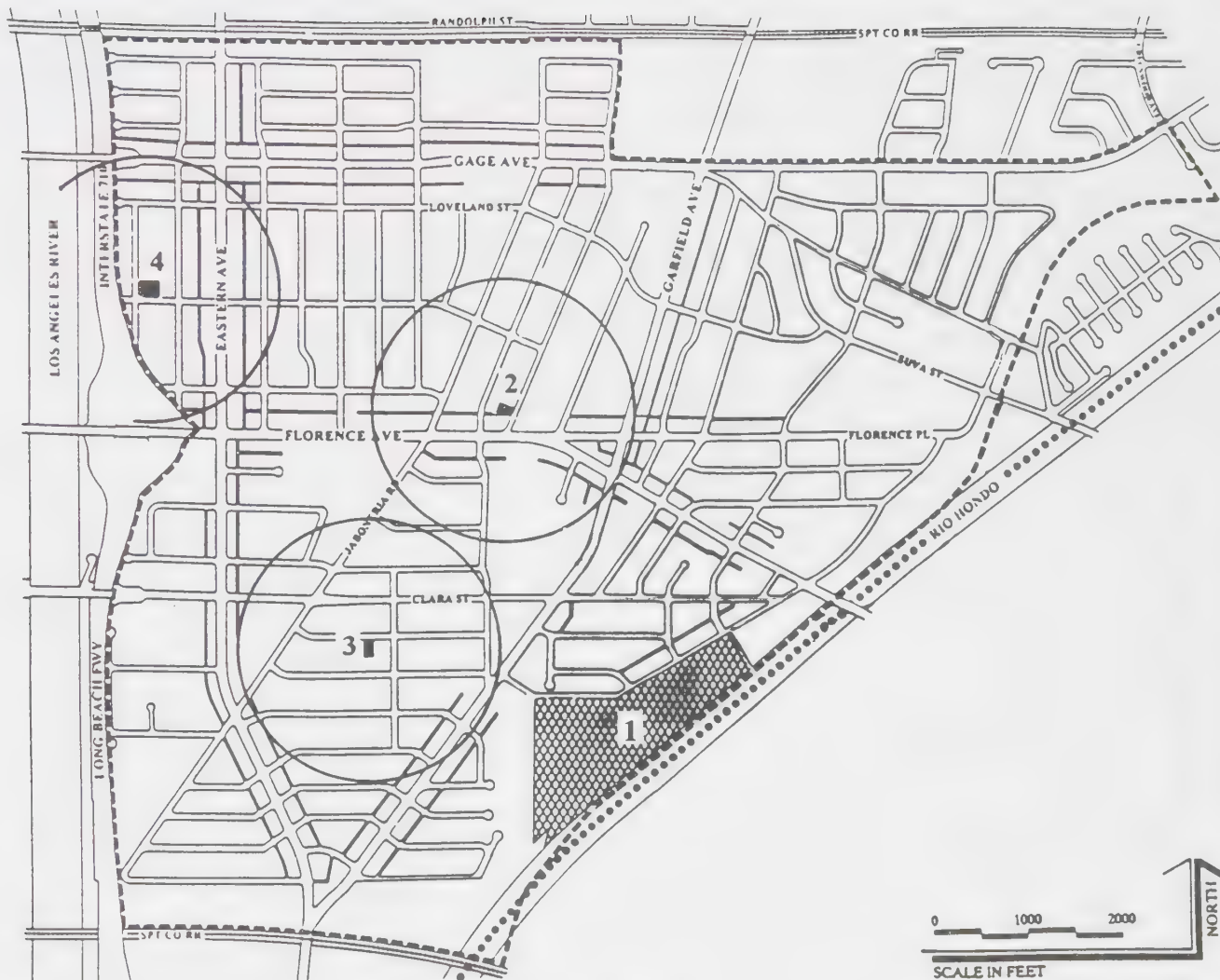
■ **Darwell Park:** Darwell Park is a .24-acre mini-park located on Darwell Avenue, just north of Florence Avenue. It has swings on a sand area with the remainder of the park as grass.

■ **Gallant Park:** Gallant Park is a .27-acre mini-park located on Gallant Street, just west of Gephart Avenue. The park includes a picnic tables, bar-b-que grills, benches, concrete walks, park lighting, swings, play structure, see-saw, sand areas, and a small turf area.

■ **Marlow Park:** Marlow Park is a .61-acre mini park located at the northeast corner of Marlow Avenue and Lubec Street. Amenities include two play structures in sand areas, tether ball pole, concrete walkways, park lighting, benches, picnic tables, bar-b-que grills, mature shade trees, a multi-use building with restrooms, and a small grass area.







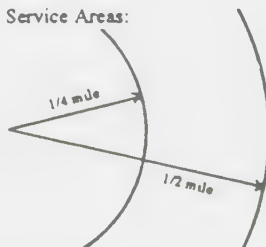
- 1 John Anson Ford Park (48 acres)
- 2 Darwell Park (0.24 acres)
- 3 Gallant Park (0.27 acres)
- 4 Marlow Park (0.61 acres)



Trail

Note: John Anson Ford Park has a 2-mile service area which encompasses the entire City of Bell Gardens.

Service Areas:



## EXHIBIT 4-1 CITY PARKS AND SERVICE AREAS



*Section 4: Open Space and Recreation Element (continued)*

■ **John Anson Ford Park:** John Anson Ford Park is a 48-acre community park operated by the City. The park is located along Park Avenue. Amenities include play fields, bleachers, play courts, play structures, a multi-purpose buildings, an auditorium, parking lots, a swimming pool, large turf areas, a pond, a picnic shelter, picnic tables,

benches, and a shaded turf area under a grove of mature trees. Also, a pedestrian bridge over the Rio Hondo Channel provides Bell Gardens residents access to the Rio Hondo bicycle and hiking trails. The County of Los Angeles operates and maintains the park, however, the park area is completely within the City boundaries.

**TABLE 4-2  
EXISTING IMPROVED PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES**

Park	Location	Acreage	Facilities
Bell Gardens Park	The southeast corner of Loveland Street and Perry Road	15.00	1 lighted baseball diamond, 2 lighted basketball courts, 1 volleyball court, 2 lighted tennis courts, 2 lighted handball courts, 2 shuffleboards, 2 horseshoe pits, 2 lighted play areas, 17 benches, 53 picnic tables, 1 group picnic area, 17 bbq grills, 1 picnic shelter, 1 multi-purpose building, 2 bleachers, 120 parking spaces, 4 restroom facilities, 4+ drinking fountains, 1 open grass area, 1 auditorium, 2+ equipment storage areas, 2 play structures, 2 sand areas, 7 bicycle racks
Darwell Park	Darwell Avenue, just north of Florence Avenue	0.24	1 open grass area, 1 swing set, 1 sand area
Gallant Park	Gallant Street, just west of Gephart Avenue	0.27	1 lighted play area, 4 benches, 3 picnic tables, 2 bbq grills, 1 swing set, 1 play structure, 2 sand areas, 1 bicycle rack
Marlow Park	The northeast corner of Marlow Avenue and Lubec Street	0.61	1 tetherball pole, 2 lighted play areas, 6 benches, 4 picnic tables, 1 bbq grill, 1 restroom facility, 1 drinking fountain, 1 equipment storage, 2 play structures, 2 sand areas, 1 bicycle rack
John Anson Ford Park	Park Avenue	48.00	1 soccer field, 3 baseball diamonds (2 lighted), 1 basketball court, 1 volleyball court, 1 lighted swimming pool, 1 tot play area, 1 play area, 20+ benches, 50+ picnic tables, 1 group picnic area, 1 picnic shelter, 1 multi-purpose building, 3 bleachers, 300+ parking spaces, 2+ restroom facilities, 3+ drinking fountains, 2 open grass areas, 1 auditorium, 1 equipment storage area, 1 play structure, 1 sand area, 1 pond, 1+ bicycle rack
<b>TOTAL ACRES</b>		<b>64.12</b>	
Source: City of Bell Gardens Recreation and Human Services Department, 1994.			





### **Park Land Criteria**

The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) has developed a generic classification system for park facilities and corresponding standards applicable to each park type. This classification system is designed to apply to a broad range of communities and requires some modification to make them applicable to Bell Gardens. Standards, such as those devised by the NRPA, are useful in identifying existing deficiencies and in projecting future needs.

The NRPA standards classify parks according to their size, service area, and function. For purposes of this needs assessment, parks in the City have been placed into one of three categories. In a number of instances, there is some difficulty in making a direct link between the NRPA standards and those facilities that are presently available to the residents. For example, the acreage of a particular park may correspond with the recommended NRPA standards for a neighborhood park, but its function may correspond more closely with that of a community park. In these instances, it was necessary to place the park in a category that better describes the park's actual function.

■ **Mini Park:** The NRPA standards indicate that this type of park should serve the recreational needs of a specific group of persons such as small children or senior citizens. Mini-parks should be located near to where the users live in close proximity to apartments, townhouse developments or senior housing projects. The service area of parks in this category should have a radius of one-quarter mile or less and an area of one acre or less. These same standards call for between 0.25 to 0.5 acre of mini-park to be provided for every 1,000 residents. For purposes of this Background Report, Darwell Park, Gallant Park, and Marlow Park fall in this category.

■ **Neighborhood Park:** Neighborhood parks are designed for active recreational and athletic activities. These facilities should be centrally located in the neighborhoods where the users live. Access to these facilities should be designed to promote easy pedestrian access. According to NRPA, the service radius for these facilities is between one-quarter and one-half mile and generally serves up to 5,000 residents. Again, referring to NRPA standards, parks in this category should be at least 15 acres in size and there should be between 1.0 and 2.0 acres of neighborhood parks for every 1,000 residents. Bell Gardens Park is classified as a neighborhood park.

■ **Community Park:** This category of parks generally offers a wide range of recreational amenities to users which may include athletic complexes, arenas, swimming pools, covered picnic areas, and playgrounds depending on the specific needs of the community and the availability of resources. These parks generally serve a number of neighborhoods and, according to NRPA standards, have a service area radius of one to two miles. The size of these parks may vary although the NRPA cites the optimal size as +/- 25 or more acres. The population service standard for this category of parks is between 5.0 and 8.0 acres per 1,000 residents. The John Anson Ford Park is classified as a community park.

As indicated earlier, precise application of the NRPA classification to existing park facilities in Bell Gardens is difficult in some instances because a number of facilities function at a neighborhood and community level. NRPA standards concerning recommended acreage for each park category also exceed what could realistically be provided by the City due to the developed nature of Bell Gardens.

As shown in this Background Report, the City has a total of 64.12 acres of developed parks. Taking



#### Section 4: Open Space and Recreation Element (continued)

into account the recreation facilities at the school sites (discussed below), this total would be just under 100 acres. A deficit of at least 122 acres occurs for the City.

##### **School Facilities**

In addition to the 64.12 acres of parks and recreational facilities serving the 42,355 residents in Bell Gardens, public school playground facilities, consisting of 43.35 acres, also help supplement the recreational needs of residents. The facilities are adjacent to residential neighborhoods and are open to the public during non-school hours. The City has joint use

agreement with the City of Commerce and the school district.

The Montebello School District serves the entire City of Bell Gardens. Schools within this District are: Bell Gardens High School, Bell Gardens Intermediate School, Suva Intermediate School, Suva Elementary School, Bell Gardens Elementary School, Garfield Elementary School, and Colmar Elementary School. The two private schools in the City are Saint Gertrudes School and Bell Gardens Christian School. Table 4-3 lists the total site acreage and open space/playground acreage for each school. Exhibit 4-2 shows the location of schools in Bell Gardens.

**TABLE 4-3  
SCHOOL SITES**

School	Recreational Acreage	Amenities
Bell Gardens High School	12.50	1 lighted football field, 1 baseball diamond, 5 basketball courts, 1 basketball half court, 6 lighted tennis courts, 3 handball courts, 1 lighted swimming pool, restroom facilities, drinking fountain, open grass area, 1 auditorium, 1 gymnasium, 1+ equipment storage
Bell Gardens Intermediate School	8.25	1 football/soccer field, 5 softball diamonds, 10 basketball courts, 1 hard court, restroom facilities, drinking fountain, open grass area, 1 bicycle rack
Suva Intermediate School	0.00	1 lighted baseball diamond, 5 softball diamonds, 6 basketball courts, 1 hard court, 1 play area, 2 bleachers, restroom facilities, drinking fountain, open grass area, 1 auditorium, 1 equipment storage area, 1 bicycle rack
Suva Elementary School	8.90	1 auditorium
Bell Gardens Elementary School	5.15	1 softball diamond, 4 basketball courts, 2 basketball half courts, 2 undersized handball courts, 1 hard court, 1 tot play area, 2 play areas, restroom facilities, drinking fountain, open grass area, 1 auditorium, 1 equipment storage area, 1 bicycle rack
Garfield Elementary School	3.50	5 softball diamonds, 4 basketball courts, 2 undersized hand ball courts, 1 hard court, 1 tot play area, 1 play area, restroom facilities, drinking fountain, open grass area, 1 auditorium, 1 equipment storage, 1 sand area, 1 bicycle rack



**TABLE 4-3**  
**SCHOOL SITES (continued)**

School	Recreational Acreage	Amenities
Colmar Elementary School	3.15	1 softball diamond, 1 hard court, 1 tot play area, 2 play areas, restroom facilities, drinking fountain, 1 auditorium, 1 equipment storage, 1 play structure, 1 sand area, 1 bicycle rack
Saint Gertrudes School	1.70	open grass area
Bell Gardens Christian School	0.20	2 basketball goals
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>43.35</b>	
Source: City of Bell Gardens Park and Recreation Specific Plan, Phase 1, 1994.		

### ***Other Open Space***

Other open space in the City is listed below and is shown in Exhibit 4-3.

### ***Southern California Edison Company (SCE) Transmission Line Easement***

The SCE transmission line easement, which comprises 54.47 acres, bisects Bell Gardens in a north-south direction. The multi-use concept has been applied to the easement as it is utilized for truck gardening and the raising of nursery stock. In this manner, the easement serves to provide visual relief from the persistent urban pattern of the region. The easement also includes an existing community soccer field, and has the potential for other sports fields and tracks. The easement's recreational use potential includes trails, bikeways, jogging paths, etc.

### ***Los Angeles County Flood Control District (LACFCD) Easement***

The northeasterly periphery of the City is bounded by 23.90 acres of flood control right-of-way which is utilized by the LACFCD as

percolation basins for groundwater replenishment. As with the SCE easement, the flood control right-of-way serves a multiple function and provides visual relief from the constant urbanization.

### ***Rivers***

The City's geographic location offers certain advantages for future regional open space. Location between the Rio Hondo and Los Angeles Rivers offers a major opportunity to be a part of a system of connected recreation areas. In response to this opportunity, the City has joined with other jurisdictions of the East Central Area Planning Council in supporting the recommendation to develop the banks of these flood channels for open space as is reflected in the "Rio Hondo/Los Angeles Rivers Beautification/Recreation Report." This plan would connect Bell Gardens to the Whittier Narrows Regional Recreation Area through a series of riding and hiking trails and would provide a direct link to the John Anson Ford Park.





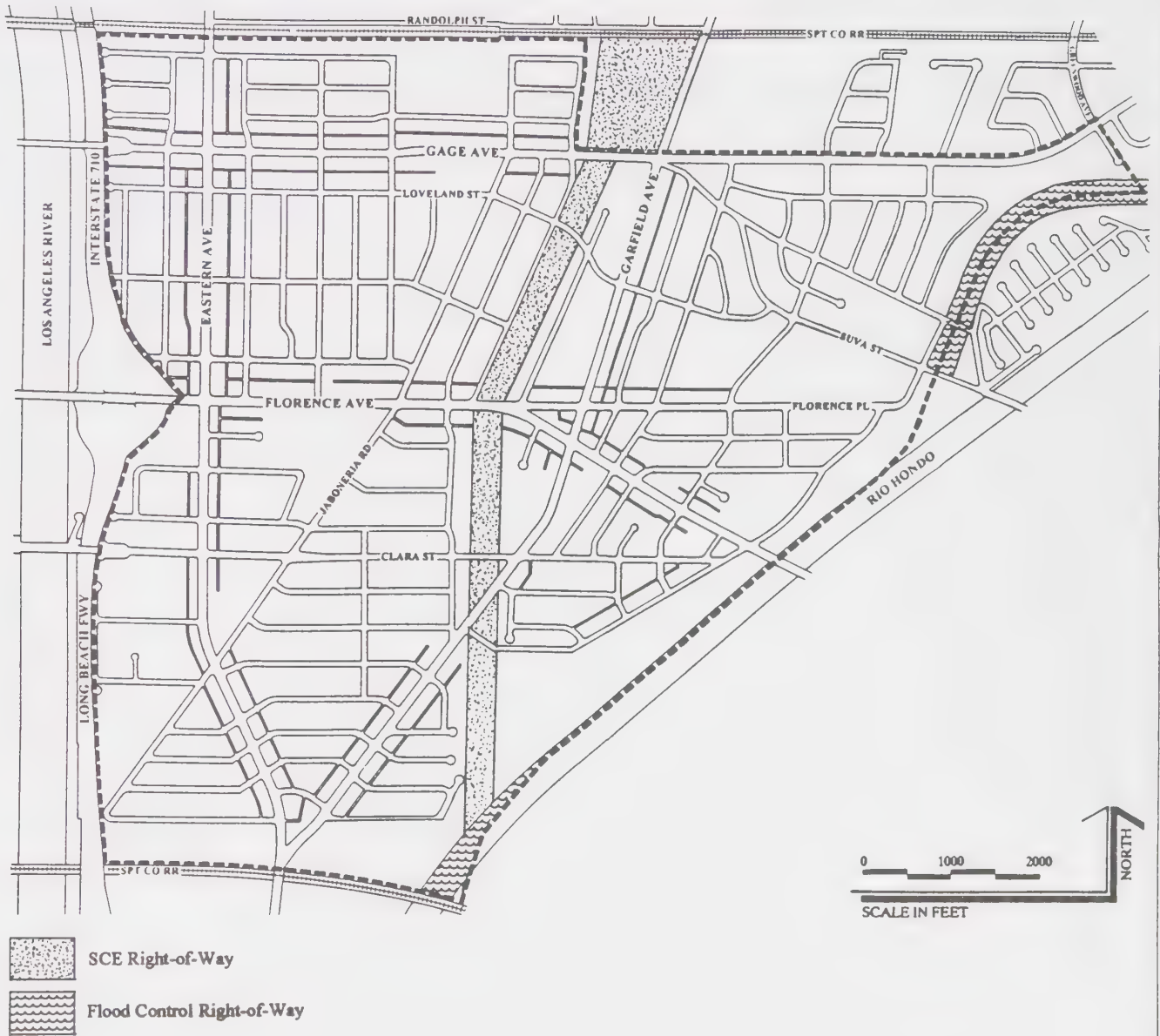




- A Bell Gardens High School
- B Bell Gardens Elementary School
- C Bell Gardens Intermediate School
- D Colmar Elementary School
- E Garfield Elementary School
- F Suva Elementary School
- G Suva Intermediate School
- H Adult School
- I Bell Gardens Christian - Private
- J St. Gertrudes - Private

## EXHIBIT 4-2 SCHOOLS





## EXHIBIT 4-3 EASEMENTS



*Section 4: Open Space and Recreation Element (continued)*

**Vacant Land**

The development of additional park land in the City is somewhat constrained by the lack of available vacant land. As of July 1991 (date of

aerial photographs), 2.1% of the City's 2.39 square miles are vacant (2.6% if street acreage is excluded from the calculations). Table 4-4 summarizes the vacant land acreages, according to each lot's General Plan and Zoning designation.

TABLE 4-4 VACANT LOTS				
General Plan Land Use Designation	Site #	Location	Acres	Zone
Very Low Density Residential (0.37 total acres)	1	West side of Jaboneria, at Fostoria	0.37	P-1
Low Density Residential (2.69 total acres)	2	SE corner of Jaboneria and Agra	0.24	R-2
	3	SW corner of Foster Bridge and Orange	0.28	R-2
	4	SE corner of Foster Bridge and Orange	0.06	R-2
	5	West side of Perry, at Alvina	0.21	R-2
	6	East side of Scott, south of Hannon	0.11	R-2
	7	South side of Live Oak, west of Ira	0.23	R-2
	8	North side of Quinn, east of Bell Gardens Avenue	0.83	R-2
	9	North end of Bell Gardens Avenue	0.09	R-2
	10	South side of Clara, west of Eastern	0.48	R-2
	11	North side of Cecilia, east of Eastern	0.16	R-2
Medium Density Residential (5.16 total acres)	12	North side of Foster Bridge, west of Perry	0.17	R-3
	13	SW corner of Gage and Greenwood	4.30	R-3
	14	South side of Clara, east of Eastern	0.34	R-3
	15	SW corner of Jaboneria and Clara	0.17	R-3
	16	North side of Foster Bridge, at Gage intersection	0.18	C-1
Central Business District (6.24 total acres)	17	NW corner of Loveland and Sprech	2.07	R-1 PUD
	18	Between Priory and Clara, at the 710 Freeway	3.72	R-1 PUD
	19	West side of Eastern, south of Loveland	0.22	C-2
	20	NW corner of Florence and Eastern	0.23	C-2





*Section 4: Open Space and Recreation Element (continued)*

**TABLE 4-4  
VACANT LOTS (continued)**

<b>General Plan Land Use Designation</b>	<b>Site #</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Zone</b>
General Commercial (1.37 total acres)	21	SW corner of Garfield and Shull	0.19	C-1
	22	North side of Florence, west of Garfield	0.15	C-2
	23	Between Live Oak and Fry, next to Bell Gardens Middle School	1.03	P-1
Office and Professional (4.13 total acres)	24	West side of Garfield, across from the Civic Center	4.13	
Industrial (10.24 total acres)	25	West side of Garfield, north of Loveland	0.46	M-1
	26	East side of Garfield, north of Loveland	0.55	M-1
	27	South side of Loveland, east of Suva Elementary School	1.93	M-1
	28	SW corner of Florence and Scout	0.17	M-1
	29	South side of Florence, west of Emil	0.14	M-1
	30	West side of Perry, north of Clara	0.14	M-1
	31	East side of Scout, north of Shull	0.07	M-1
	32	South side of Shull, along the Rio Hondo Channel	1.03	M-1
	33	South side of Clara, east of Gephardt	0.17	M-1
	34	South side of Shull, at the 710 Freeway	2.87	M-1
	35	SW corner of Ira and Clara	0.09	M-1
	36	North side of Clara, east of Gephardt	0.24	M-1
	37	East side of Scout, at Clara	0.14	M-1
	38	East side of Garfield, north of Shull	0.17	M-1
	39	South side of Gage, west of Garfield	2.07	M-1 HPD
Source: David Evans and Associates, Inc., 1993.				

Of the 30.20 acres of vacant land, 8.22 acres have a residential General Plan Land Use designation of Very Low Density, Low Density, or Medium Density. The remaining 21.98 acres are designated commercial or industrial. There

are also two large vacant areas (2.07 acres and 3.72 acres) designated as Central Business District, but zoned R-1 PUD and located within residential areas.



# City of Bell Gardens GENERAL PLAN

## Section 5 Conservation Element



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## SECTION 5: CONSERVATION ELEMENT

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### **INTRODUCTION TO THE CONSERVATION ELEMENT**

The City of Bell Gardens Conservation Element is a state-mandated general plan element, as required by Section 65302(d) of the California Government Code and the State Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA). State law indicates:

*"A conservation element [shall be required] for the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources including water and its hydraulic force, forests, soils, rivers and other waters, harbors, fisheries, wildlife, minerals, and other natural resources. That portion of the conservation element, including waters, shall be developed in coordination with any county-wide water agency and with all district and city agencies which have developed, served, controlled or conserved water for any purpose for the county or city for which the plan is prepared."*

As a result, the Conservation Element for the City of Bell Gardens focuses on four key issue areas: cultural resources, ecological resources, geological resources, and water resources.

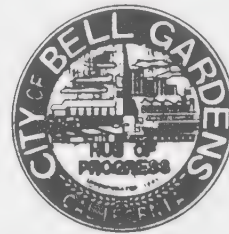
The City of Bell Gardens will continue to maintain its links to the past through the implementation of this Conservation Element which promotes the preservation of noted historical structures. The Conservation Element also underscores the City's commitment to improve environmental quality through the conservation of water and other ecological resources.

The Bell Gardens Conservation Element consists of the following sections:

■ **Conservation Element Policies and Programs.** This section indicates the issues, policies, and implementing programs that apply to both existing and future development in the City. The issues

encompass a range of issues and opportunities, including the very high risk of liquefaction for the entire City and several historic structures that are located in Bell Gardens.

■ **Conservation Element Background Report.** This section of the Conservation Element describes the existing conditions in the City relative to soils, groundwater resources, air quality, and cultural resources.



### **CONSERVATION ELEMENT POLICIES AND PROGRAMS**

The Conservation Element focuses on the four key issue areas: cultural resources, ecological resources, geological resources, and water resources. Within each topical area is a policy and a series of supporting implementing programs.

The preservation of the City's history and environmental resources are the focus of these policies.

#### **Issue 1: Cultural Resources**

The City of Bell Gardens has a rich history that goes back to the development of the first ranchos that led to the establishment of settlements during the last century. While a number of significant sites and structures may still be found in the City, past development has led to the loss of others (such as the original Lugo Adobe). The following criteria is used for determining if state





or national designation should be pursued for significant historic resources in the City of Bell Gardens:

- The site or structure is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- The site of structure is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- The site or structure embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, method of construction, represents the work of a master, posses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- The site or structure has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history; or
- The site or structure represents work by significant architects or architectural styles.

Ordinarily, cemeteries, birthplaces, graves of historical figures, properties owned by religious institutions or used for religious purposes, structures that have been moved from their original locations, reconstructed historic buildings, properties primarily commemorative in nature, and properties that have achieved significance within the past 50 years *are not considered to be eligible* for the National Register. However, structures that have been removed, altered, or constructed within the past 50 years may meet eligibility requirements if:

- A building or structure removed from its original location, but which is significant primarily for architectural value, or which is the surviving structure most importantly associated with a historic person or event; or

- A birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance if there is no other appropriate site or building directly associated with his productive life; or

- A reconstructed building when accurately executed in a suitable environment and presented in a dignified manner as part of a restoration master plan, or when no other building or structure with the same association has survived; or

- A property achieving significance within the past 50 years if it is of exceptional importance.

The City of Bell Gardens has several historic structures within its boundaries which are considered as resources worthy of conservation as part of this General Plan (Exhibit 5-1). Guidelines will be prepared to outline procedures and policies for the protection of these resources.

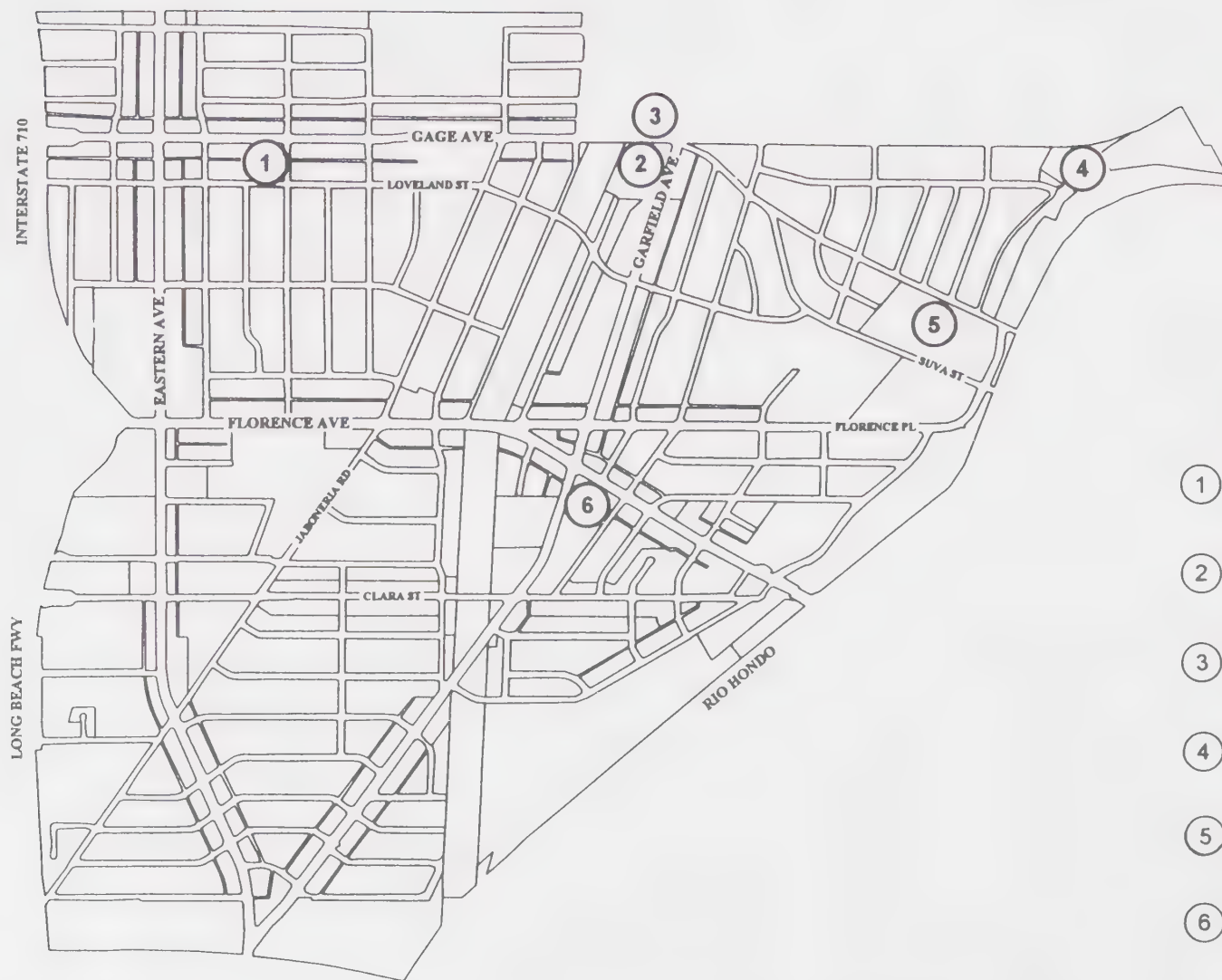
*Policy 1: The City of Bell Gardens shall safeguard the community's heritage by identifying and preserving appropriate structures and sites which have historical significance.*

#### **Issue 2: Ecological Resources**

The soils within the City have been altered by past development. The import and export of soil that is part of excavation and fill activities during construction may have changed the soil associations in developed areas.

The City of Bell gardens does not contain significant sand and gravel resources as identified by the Department of Mines and Geology. Additionally, large pockets of natural gas and oil





- ① Old Specht Home  
6410 El Selinda Avenue
- ② Lugo Ranch House  
6360 East Gage Avenue
- ③ Site of the Laguna School  
Demolished in 1957
- ④ Governor Gage Mansion  
7000 East Gage Avenue
- ⑤ Woodworth House  
6820 Foster Bridge Blvd.
- ⑥ Peterson House  
7535 Perry Road

EXHIBIT 5-1  
HISTORIC SITES



have been found in surrounding communities, but they are not believed to extend into Bell Gardens.

Because of the low average wind speeds in the summer and a persistent daytime temperature inversion, emission of hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen have an opportunity to combine with sunlight to produce smog. Although air quality in the South Coast Air Basin has improved in recent years, the area still recorded the greatest number of days exceeding the federal ozone and carbon monoxide standards.

**Policy 2:** *The City of Bell Gardens shall, to the extent possible, protect remaining ecological resources and enhance those resources through programs in the Open Space and Recreation Element and the Circulation and Transportation Element.*

### **Issue 3: Water Resources**

The Central Basin Pressure Area provides an underground water basin utilized to serve a portion of the City's domestic water needs. Water recharge areas are provided by a combination of permeable areas including yards, parks, utility rights-of-way, and water recharge areas within the Rio Hondo and Los Angeles Rivers rights-of-way. Water in the City is derived from local groundwater wells and pumping depends on the actual demand for water. The groundwater quality in the City is considered to be good and does not require treatment. Replenishment of the underground water basin is essential and should be assured through the provision of adequate open spaces throughout the City.

**Policy 3:** *The City of Bell Gardens shall protect the quality of water in the underground water basin by optimizing open space areas with programs adopted as part of*

*the Open Space and Recreation Element.*

### **Programs**

The following programs implement the above three policies and support the City of Bell Gardens vision of "Pride in the Community/Orgullo en la Comunidad." The programs are identified with their corresponding policies in Table 5-1, following this section.

#### ***Air Quality Management Plan Implementation.***

The City will comply with regional AQMP regulations (as described in the background report).

**Timing:** Immediate

**Agency:** Community Development, City Manager, and Public Works

**Funding:** General Fund

#### ***Archaeological and Paleontological Resources.***

The City shall stipulate in all major project approvals, that should archaeological or paleontological resources be uncovered during excavation and grading activities, all work would cease until appropriate salvage measures are established. Appendix K of the CEQA Guidelines shall be followed for excavation monitoring and salvage work that may be necessary.

**Timing:** 1998

**Agency:** Building Department

**Funding:** General Fund





**City Water Conservation.** In addition to the City's 1993 Water Conservation Ordinance, the City shall develop water conservation programs for City facilities (Civic Center, City parks, maintenance yards, etc.) This may include the retrofit of City facilities for water-efficient plumbing fixtures; the use of drought tolerant and/or xeriscape landscaping in City parks; and the posting of water conservation practices at all City facilities.

**Timing:** 1997

**Agency:** Building Department

**Funding:** General Fund

**County Coordination.** The City Bell Gardens shall cooperate with Los Angeles County concerning the implementation of programs for water conservation, stormwater discharge, solid waste management, and flood control. This will include projects and programs for the maintenance and use of the Los Angeles and Rio Hondo Rivers.

**Timing:** 1997

**Agency:** Public Works Development

**Funding:** General Fund

**Cultural Awareness.** The City of Bell Gardens shall develop programs for increasing cultural awareness in the community. The City shall coordinate the promotion of cultural awareness among area residents and shall acquire additional books and documents concerning local historical and cultural topics. It shall also develop programs to inform local residents of cultural resources that have been preserved in the area.

**Timing:** 1997

**Agency:** Recreation Department

**Funding:** General Fund

**Water/Landscape Conservation Ordinance.** The City shall promote the use of drought-tolerant

and/or xeriscape landscaping in private developments through the continued implementation of its Water/Landscaping Conservation Ordinance. This will include measures to reduce irrigation requirements for yards (drip irrigation, tree wells, mulch, etc.) and recommended plant species which have low irrigation requirements. While this may have small and short term benefits, continued land recycling activities will create cumulative advantages in the long term.

**Timing:** Ongoing

**Agency:** Community Development

**Funding:** General Fund

**Energy Conservation Guidelines.** The City shall enforce the energy conservation standards in Title 24 of the California Administrative Code, the Uniform Building Code, and other state laws on energy conservation design, insulation and appliances. Energy needs shall be evaluated and conservation measures incorporated into new development in accordance with Appendix F of the State CEQA Guidelines and Appendix J of the City CEQA Guidelines. Also, the City shall promote the use of new technologies on energy conservation in new development, as may be appropriate. Other measures that would reduce energy consumption during construction and operation of the structures shall be encouraged.

**Timing:** Ongoing

**Agency:** Community Development's Building Department's

**Funding:** General Fund

**Environmental Review.** The City shall continue to evaluate the environmental impacts of new development and provide mitigation measures prior to development approval, as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).



Adequate environmental review shall be provided for major projects and those that will have a potential to adversely impact the environment. Issue areas that will be addressed in the environmental review of development proposals include: earth and geology, air quality, water and hydrology, plant life, animal life, noise, light and glare, land use, natural resources, risk of upset, population, housing, traffic and circulation, public services, energy, utilities, human health, aesthetics, recreation, and cultural resources. In compliance with CEQA, the City shall also assign responsibilities for the verification of the implementation of mitigation measures.

**Timing:** Ongoing  
**Agency:** Community Development  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Historical Building Code.** The City will adopt alternate building code standards for historic structures, as authorized by the State Historical Building Code.

**Timing:** 1995  
**Agency:** Community Development's Building Department's  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Historical Preservation District.** The City will revise, as necessary, the Zoning Ordinance section regarding the existing Historical Prevention District. The City shall also review the existing boundaries of the S-HPD and revise as necessary.

**Timing:** Ongoing  
**Agency:** Community Development  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Public Awareness.** The City shall develop a public awareness program to encourage residents to practice conservation measures and to discourage carelessness in activities that affect the environment. The program shall include articles on various environmental issues (air, water, hazardous materials, land, energy, etc.) and programs in "Bell Gardens Now"; free water conservation tips, brochures and kits; advertisement of energy conservation alternatives and rebate programs; and the hazards of disposing household hazardous wastes with municipal wastes.

**Timing:** 1999  
**Agency:** City Manager  
**Funding:** General Fund

TABLE 5-1  
 CONSERVATION ELEMENT POLICIES AND PROGRAMS MATRIX

Policies	Programs
<i>Policy 1: The City of Bell Gardens shall safeguard the community's heritage by identifying and preserving appropriate structures and sites which have historical significance.</i>	Archaeological and Paleontological Resources Cultural Awareness Environmental Review Historical Building Codes Historical Preservation District





TABLE 5-1  
CONSERVATION ELEMENT POLICIES AND PROGRAMS MATRIX

Policies	Programs
<i>Policy 2: The City of Bell Gardens shall, to the extent possible, protect remaining ecological resources and enhance those resources through programs in the Open Space and Recreation Element and the Circulation and Transportation Element.</i>	City Energy Conservation County Coordination Drought Tolerant Landscaping Energy Conservation Guidelines Environmental Review
<i>Policy 3: The City of Bell Gardens shall protect the quality of water in the underground water basin by optimizing open space areas with programs adopted as part of the Open Space and Recreation Element.</i>	Water/Landscape Conservation Ordinance County Coordination Drought Tolerant Landscaping Environmental Review
Source: David Evans and Associates, Inc., March 1994.	

## CONSERVATION ELEMENT BACKGROUND REPORT

The Conservation Element Background Report provides an overview of the City's existing environmental resources (which include biological, groundwater, mineral, cultural, archaeological, and historical resources). This Background Report also includes an analysis of local air quality. Environmental resources are typically nonrenewable or limited and need to be preserved and managed in order to be available for future generations. This Report also provides a needs assessment and an overview of opportunities for construction.

### Environmental Setting

The City of Bell Gardens is located within the north central section of the coastal plain of Los Angeles County. The coastal plain is bounded by: the Santa Monica Mountains on the north; the Elysian, Repetto, Merced and Puente Hills on the northeast; the Los Angeles-Orange County line on the southeast; and the Pacific Ocean on the south

and west. The plain slopes gently from the north and northeast highlands, south towards the ocean.

The coastal plain was formed from recent (Holocene) alluvial deposition. The alluvial fans of the Los Angeles, Rio Hondo, and San Gabriel Rivers resulted in the formation of a gently sloping plain through stream deposition. Bell Gardens is situated on the low lying plain with very limited differences in topography. The Los Angeles, Rio Hondo and San Gabriel Rivers are the main river channels bisecting the coastal plain. The Los Angeles River drains the San Fernando Valley on the north and flows across the plain past the City of Bell Gardens, into the Pacific Ocean at San Pedro Bay. The Rio Hondo River flows southwest across the plain and connects to the Los Angeles River one and a half miles south of Bell Gardens. The San Gabriel River flows south on the eastern section of the plain, generally parallel to the Los Angeles River.

The Los Angeles Basin's climate is mediterranean and characterized by mild, sunny winters with occasional rain and warm, dry summers. The Pacific Ocean keeps the climate temperate and the coastal mountain ranges on the north and east of





the Basin act as buffers against the extreme heat and winter cold of the desert and plateau regions. Rain occurs between December and March with an average rainfall of 14 inches per year. Winter lows range from 40°F to 50°F and summer highs rarely exceed 100°F. Humidity averages 64 percent in February and 74 percent in August with a yearly average of 71 percent. Northeasterly winds and sea-land breezes are prevalent with the Santa Ana Winds blowing intermittently from October to March.

The geology of Bell Gardens and the surrounding area is characterized by a top layer of undivided successions of nonmarine sand and gravel of Quaternary age and marine sandstone and siltstone of Pleistocene and late Pliocene age. This layer is approximately 11,600 feet deep. The more recent sedimentary deposits are believed to have been caused by the weathering and erosion of rocks, granites, schists, shale, and sandstones from the surrounding mountains.

Under the upper layer are rocks of the Repetto Formation. This layer is 6,400 feet deep of marine fine to coarse grained sandstone with minor interbedded siltstone. Underlying the Repetto Formation are undivided upper Miocene rocks. The Miocene rocks are at least 5,200 feet deep of probably marine sandstone with interbedded sandstone and shale. Undivided Lower Tertiary and Upper Cretaceous rocks underlie the Miocene rocks which are probably marine clastic sedimentary rocks with extrusive igneous rocks near the top. The lowest known layer are granitoid intrusive rocks of the Jurassic to early Late Cretaceous Age.

### *Soil Resources*

A soil association is a group of soils that have the same profile, arrangement, sequence of layers, or other characteristics. The City of Bell Gardens is overlain by two soil associations. The Tujunga-

Soboba Association covers approximately 20 percent of the western and eastern sections of the City. The Hanford Association covers the majority of the City at the central sections. Tujunga soils have high infiltration rates when thoroughly wetted, resulting in low runoff potential. Hanford soils have moderate infiltration rates when thoroughly wetted. Both Tujunga-Soboba and Hanford Associations have low shrink-swell behavior, low corrosivity, and slight septic tank limitations. The Tujunga-Soboba Association is limited by its ability to withstand pressure from building foundations. It is not suitable for use as a water retention structure and is a good source of sand. The Hanford Association has moderate capacity to withstand soil pressure and has severe to moderate limitation as a water retention structure.

The soils within the City have been altered by past development. The import and export of soil that is part of excavation and fill activities during construction may have changed the soil associations in developed areas. With most of the City developed, surface soils may no longer reflect the soil associations shown.

The City of Bell Gardens does not contain significant sand and gravel resources as identified by the Department of Mines and Geology. The aggregate resource classification map shows that Bell Gardens is in an area where adequate information indicates no significant mineral deposits are present. While the City is located beside the Los Angeles River, which is considered a fair to good source of sand, concrete channels now line the river bed. This precludes mining activity from occurring in the City. Land under the City does not contain the amount of rock required to make mining profitable. Also, there are no open areas remaining for mining. Large pockets of natural gas and oil have been found in surrounding communities, but they are not believed to extend into Bell Gardens.



There are essentially three primary factors that govern an area's susceptibility to liquefaction: (1) age and type of sedimentary (alluvial) deposit; (2) penetration resistance and liquefaction susceptibility; and (3) depth to ground water. Virtually all of the City of Bell Gardens is underlain by recent late Holocene alluvium consisting of silt, gravel, sand, and clay and is characterized by soils that were flooded historically (less than 1,000 years ago) and undifferentiated late Pleistocene alluvium consisting of well consolidated gravel, sand, silt, and clay. These soils are susceptible to the effects of liquefaction. In addition, the groundwater is at relatively shallow depths, ranging from 30 to 50 feet. In a comprehensive detailed study of the earthquake risk in Southern California, virtually all of the City was found to be in an area of very high risk for liquefaction.

#### ***Groundwater Resources***

The City of Bell Gardens is underlain by the complex groundwater system of the Los Angeles coastal plain. There are four groundwater basins in the coastal plain: the West Coast, Santa Monica, Hollywood and Central Basins. The City is within the Central Basin which is bounded on the north and northeast by the Elysian, Repetto, Merced and Puente Hills; on the east by the County line and on the south and west by the Rosecrans, Signal and Bixby Ranch Hills. Groundwater resources in the Central Basin generally consists of an upper layer of shallow, unconfined and semi-perched water; a principal body of fresh water underneath; and salt water under the freshwater resources. Water movement is generally from points of recharge (percolation areas, spreading grounds, streams) to points of discharge (groundwater wells, ocean, springs), due to differences in pressure between these points. The major recharge area in the coastal plain is the Whittier Narrows area.

Aquifers underlying the coastal plain resulted from the historical development of the topography for over 100 million years (Exhibit 5-2). The deposition of sand, gravel, silt, clay and rock has resulted in a highly complex geologic and groundwater structure. Water-bearing deposits are unconsolidated and semi-consolidated alluvial sediments from Recent times (15,000 years ago). These deposits, which hold water and allow water to pass through, are referred to as aquifers. Non-water-bearing deposits are consolidated rocks and ground layers which provide limited water, forming the boundaries between aquifers.

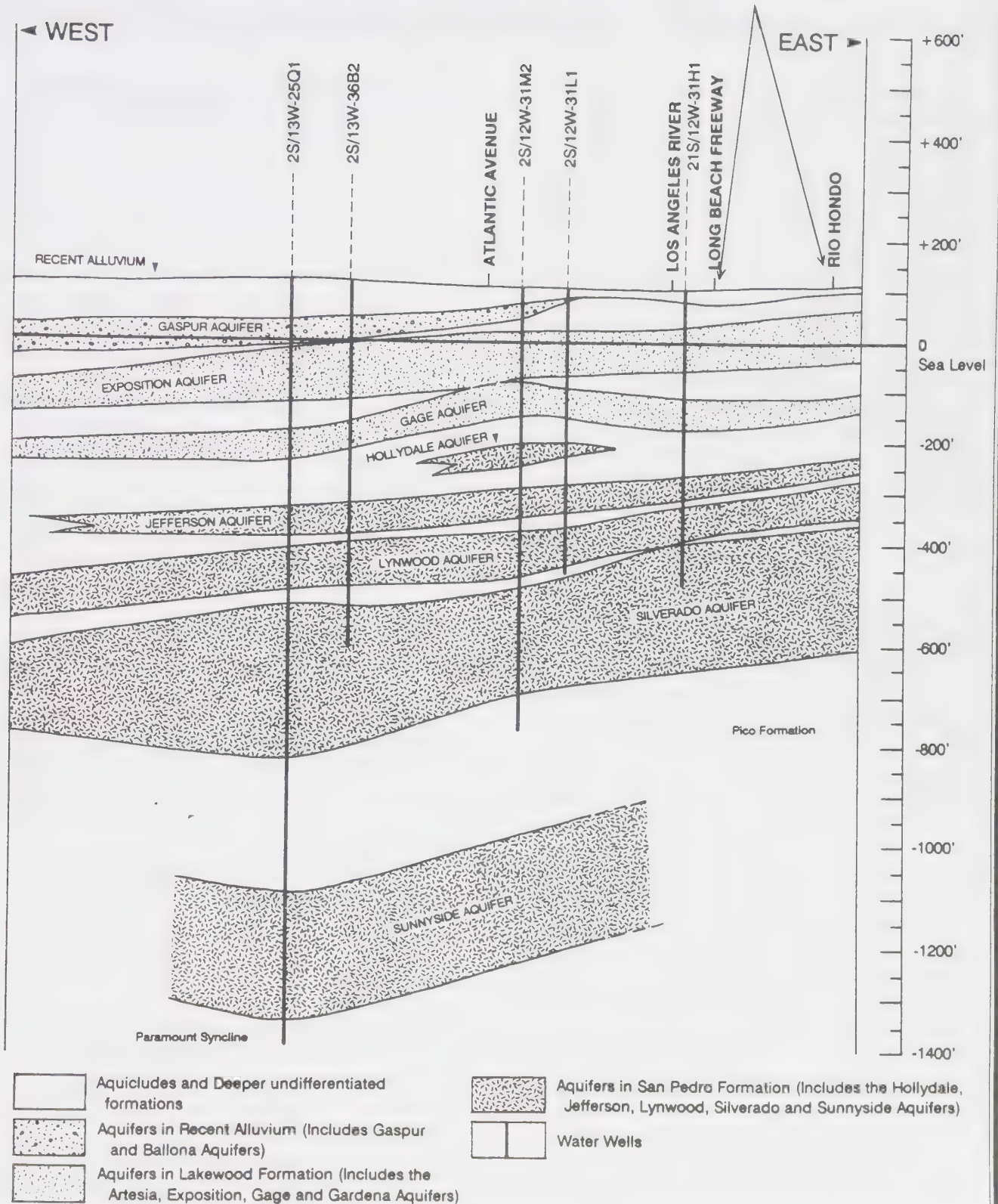
The main aquifers in the area are the Hollydale, Jefferson, Lynwood, Silverado and Sunnyside Aquifers. They are the principal aquifers used for domestic water in the Los Angeles area. The Hollydale Aquifer is a discontinuous aquifer beneath the Gage-Gardena Aquifer. It consists of yellow sands and gravel in the northeastern sections and grey, blue and black sand with mud, and clay and marine shells near the Newport-Inglewood fault. Its boundary is irregular and sinuous, suggesting it was formed by stream deposition, but only shallow marine deposits are found. It is approximately 250 feet deep at the area north of the Bell Gardens city limits. Its lowest point is 500 feet below sea level at an area 2 miles east of Compton. Its lack of continuity and the presence of fine-grained materials do not allow it to store large amounts of water.

The Jefferson Aquifer is found only in the Central Basin of the coastal plain. It generally has fine-grained sediments with gravel in the Whittier Narrows area and a few scattered areas. The aquifer is made up of sand with gravel and clay layers and has a maximum thickness of 145 feet. Within the City of Bell Gardens, it is approximately 20 feet thick with a base 300 feet below sea level. It merges with overlying and





# City of Bell Gardens



SOURCE: State of California Department of Water Resources, Southern California District

## EXHIBIT 5-2 IDEALIZED GEOLOGIC SECTION





underlying aquifers near the hillsides to the north of the plain. Very few wells tap the Jefferson Aquifer.

The Lynwood Aquifer is made up of yellow, brown, and red coarse gravel, sand, silts and clay. It has a thickness of 50 to 1,000 feet. The Rio Hondo and Pico faults have caused offsets on the Lynwood Aquifer in the Pico Rivera area. It is a major producer of water with a yield ranging from 200 to 2,100 gallons per minute.

The Silverado Aquifer has yellow to brown coarse to fine sands and gravel interbedded with yellow to brown silts and clays. It has a maximum thickness of 500 feet and a maximum depth of 1,200 feet below sea level. It has also been considerably offset by all faults in the region. It is a major water producer with a maximum yield of 4,700 gallons per minute.

The Sunnyside Aquifer has coarse deposits of sand and gravel with interlayers of sandy clay and clay. Well logs show marine shells and marine type clays and shales are present within the aquifer. It has a maximum thickness of 300 feet and has a maximum yield of 1,500 gallons per minute. It is also offset by many faults in the region.

Aquifers beyond the Pleistocene age are not known because of limited well log data. They are also too deep to be economically tapped by groundwater wells.

Water in the City is derived from local groundwater wells and pumping depends on the actual demand for water. Groundwater quality is generally good and does not require treatment. Estimates of groundwater storage in the central basin are 17.6 million acre-feet, with 31.7 million acre-feet in the entire coastal plain. Water pumping rights are controlled by the Central Water Basin Replenishment District. The Central

Water Basin Replenishment District levies an assessment on all parties pumping groundwater in the Central Basin. Collected funds are used to purchase surplus water from the Colorado River Aqueduct or the State Water Project through the Metropolitan Water District (MWD). Imported water is spread and injected into the ground to replenish underground water supply resources. Groundwater recharge also includes natural runoff, reclaimed water, and underflow from the San Gabriel Valley. When a water company needs more water than it is allotted, it is allowed to buy or lease additional water rights. The MWD has historically purchased water from the Colorado River. However, in 1974, the MWD started to buy water from the State Water Project.

### *Vegetation and Wildlife*

Trees and lush vegetation used to be found along the rivers surrounding the City of Bell Gardens. Urbanization and the channelization of the Rio Hondo and Los Angeles Rivers have destroyed native vegetation and brought in non-native lawn grass, hedges and trees. The Los Angeles River is lined and concrete dikes have been built on both sides of the channel. This resulted in the loss of natural riparian habitats.

Without the natural environment, native plants and animal communities are not expected to be present. Only small birds and an occasional migratory flock are spotted in the area. There are many endangered, rare and threatened animals and plants in the region but studies and surveys have not identified the presence of such plants or animals in Bell Gardens. A records search at the Natural Diversity Data Base of the Department of Fish and Game showed that the nearest recorded occurrence of a special animal is approximately 4 miles from the City. The San Diego Horned Lizard (*Phrynosoma Coronatum Blainvillii*) was found in the City of Compton at Rosecrans



Avenue and the Southern Pacific Railroad, and in Long Beach one mile west of the Los Angeles River near 68th Street. The San Diego Horned Lizard is listed as Category 2 on the federal List (information may warrant listing, but substantial data is lacking) and S2S3 on the California List (Species of Special Concern). It is considered rare and endangered by the Department of Fish and Game.

### *Air Quality*

The City of Bell Gardens is located in the South Coast Air Basin (SCAB) which includes Los Angeles County and portions of Orange, Riverside, and San Bernardino Counties. The 6,000 square mile SCAB is bounded by the Pacific Ocean on the west, the San Gabriel, San Bernardino, and San Jacinto mountains to the north and east, and the Transverse Ranges to the west.

The topography and climate of Southern California combine to make the SCAB an area of high air pollution potential. During the summer months, a warm air mass frequently descends over the cool, moist marine layer produced by the interaction between the ocean's surface and the lowest layer of the atmosphere. The warm upper layer forms a cup over the cool marine layer, thereby preventing pollutants from dispersing upward and allowing them to accumulate within the lower layer. In addition, light winds during the summer further limit ventilation.

Due to the low average wind speeds in the summer and a persistent daytime temperature inversion, emissions of hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen have an opportunity to combine with

sunlight in a complex series of reactions producing photochemical oxidant (smog). The smog potential is increased in the SCAB, because

the region experiences more days of sunlight than any other major urban area, except for Phoenix.

Although air quality in the SCAB has improved in recent years, the area still recorded the greatest number of days exceeding the federal ozone standards and carbon monoxide standards. Air quality data for 1985 through 1989 provided by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) for the Los Angeles station area indicates that high ozone and carbon monoxide concentrations are continuing problems in the SCAB.

The nearest monitoring station to the City of Bell Gardens is located in the City of Lynwood (Exhibit 5-3). According to data compiled by the SCAQMD, the Lynwood station recorded the highest concentrations of carbon monoxide (CO) of all the stations monitoring CO. CO is a colorless toxic gas produced by the burning of carbon-based fuels. Automobiles are the primary source of CO emissions, though some industrial processes also contribute to carbon monoxide production. CO passes through the lungs directly into the bloodstream and interferes with the transfer of fresh oxygen to the blood, thus depriving sensitive tissues of blood. School and health warnings and alerts related to CO generally occur in the winter months.

### **Air Pollution Control Efforts**

Both the federal and state governments have set health-based ambient air quality standards for the following six pollutants: sulfur dioxide, lead, ozone, nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide, and fine particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>). Table 5-2 outlines current federal and state ambient air quality standards and Exhibit 5-4 and 5-5 illustrate the number of days that federal and state standards were exceeded from 1986 through 1990.





TABLE 5-2  
AMBIENT AIR QUALITY STANDARDS

California		National	
Air Pollutant	Concentration	Primary	Secondary
Ozone	>0.09 ppm, 1-hr avg. <sup>a</sup>	>0.12 ppm, 1-hr avg.	0.12 ppm, 1-hr avg.
Carbon Monoxide	>9.0 ppm, 8-hr. avg. >20 ppm, 1-hr. avg.	≥9.5 ppm, 8-hr. avg. >35 ppm, 1-hr avg.	≥9.5 ppm, 8-hr. avg. <sup>b</sup> >35 ppm, 1-hr. avg.
Nitrogen Dioxide	>0.25 ppm, 1-hr avg.	0.053 ppm, annual avg.	0.053 ppm, annual avg. <sup>c</sup>
Sulfur Dioxide	≥0.05 ppm, 24-hr avg. with ≥0.10 ozone or with 24-hr TSP ≥100 ug/m <sup>3</sup>	0.03 ppm, annual avg. >0.14 ppm, 24-hr avg.	>0.50 ppm, 3-hr. avg.
Suspended Particulate Matter (PM <sub>10</sub> )	>30 ug/m <sup>3</sup> annual geometric mean >50 ug/m <sup>3</sup> , 24-hr. avg.	>150 ug/m <sup>3</sup> , 24-hr avg.; >50 ug/m <sup>3</sup> annual arithmetic mean	>150 ug/m <sup>3</sup> , 24-hr avg.; >50 ug/m <sup>3</sup> annual arithmetic mean
Sulfates	≥25 ug/m <sup>3</sup> , 24-hr avg. <sup>d</sup>		
Lead	≥1.5 ug/m <sup>3</sup> , 30-hr. avg.	≥1.5 ug/m <sup>3</sup> , calendar quarter	>1.5 ug/m <sup>3</sup>
Hydrogen Sulfide	≥0.03 ppm, 1-hr avg.		
Vinyl Chloride	≥0.010 ppm, 24-hr. avg.		
Visibility-Reducing Particles	In sufficient amount to reduce prevailing visibility to less than 10 miles at relative humidity less than 70%, 1 observation.		
<sup>a</sup> ) Effective 3/9/87. The standard was previously ≥0.10 ppm, 1-hr. avg. <sup>b</sup> ) Effective 9/13/85. The standard changed from ≥9.3 ppm to ≥9.5 ppm. <sup>c</sup> ) Effective 7/1/85, standard changed from >.0532 ppm to >.0534 ppm. <sup>d</sup> ) Effective 3/1/87, standard changed from ≥25 ppm to >25 ppm. <sup>e</sup> ) Effective 7/1/87. The standards were previously: Primary: Annual geometric mean TSP >75 ug/m <sup>3</sup> and 24-hr avg. TSP >260 ug/m <sup>3</sup> Secondary: Annual geometric mean TSP >60 ug/m <sup>3</sup> and 24-hr avg. TSP >150 ug/m <sup>3</sup>			
ppm = parts per million by volume ug/m <sup>3</sup> = micrograms per cubic meter > = greater than ≥ = greater than or equal to			
Source: South Coast Air Quality Management District, 1991.			







EXHIBIT 5-3  
SCAQMD AIR QUALITY MONITORING STATIONS



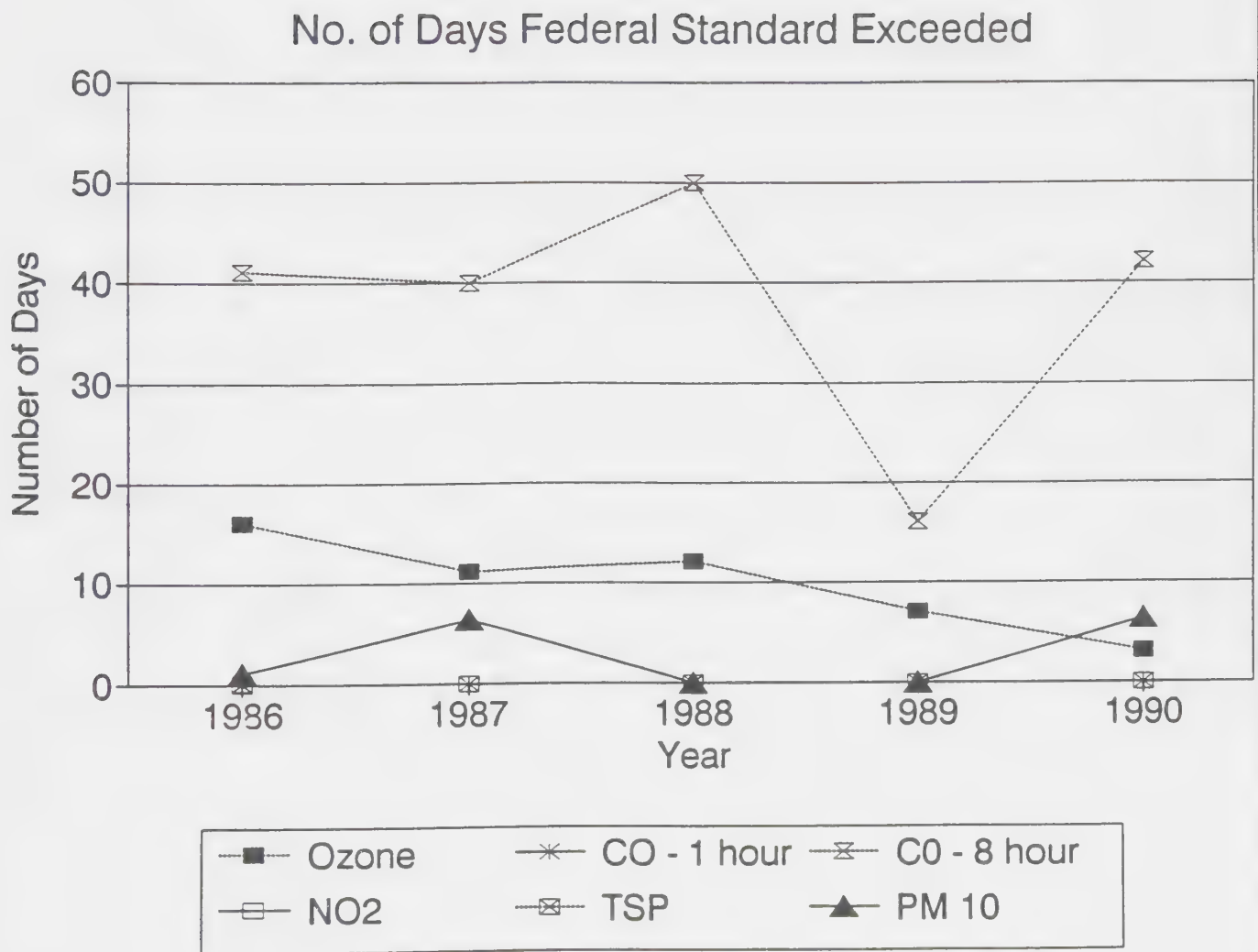


EXHIBIT 5-4  
AIR QUALITY TRENDS AT LYNWOOD STATION  
FEDERAL



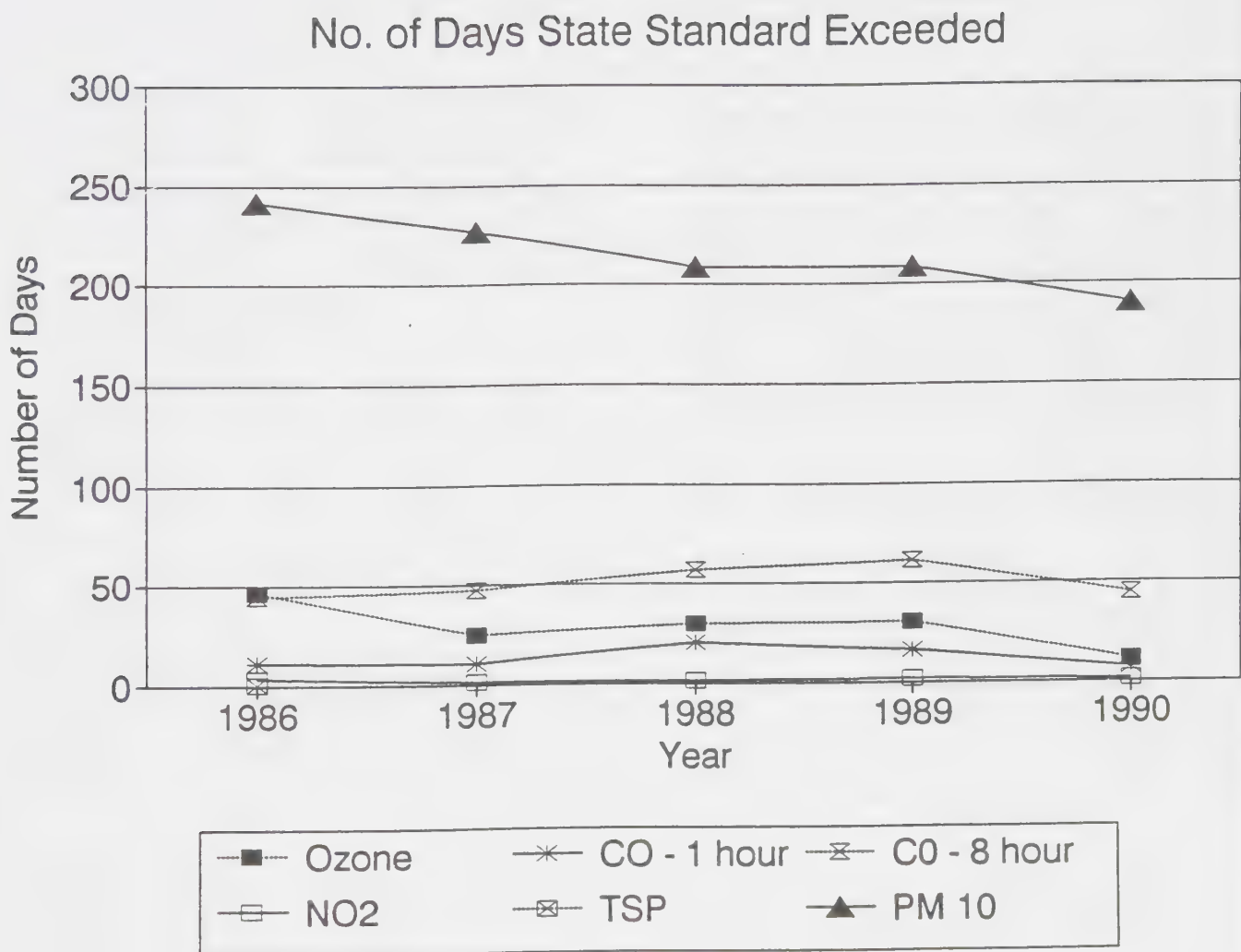


EXHIBIT 5-5  
AIR QUALITY TRENDS AT LYNWOOD STATION  
STATE





Despite the SCAQMD's establishment of many strict controls, the SCAB still fails to meet the federal air quality standards for four of the six criteria pollutants, including ozone, nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide, and PM<sub>10</sub>. Nearly all control programs developed to date have relied on development and application of cleaner technology and add-on emission control devices to vehicular and industrial sources. Only recently have efforts been directed at how emission sources are used: the Inspection and Maintenance Program, High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes, and mandatory maintenance procedures on industrial sources. Although the magnitude of the problem depends heavily on the weather conditions in a given year and improvements can only be compared for the same air monitoring stations, ozone levels have declined by almost half over the past 30 years. However, they remain at or near the top of all pollution concentrations in the country.

In 1989, the SCAQMD and SCAG adopted an Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) designed to achieve National Ambient Air Quality Standards. Utilizing a three-tiered format, the plan proposed a comprehensive set of control measures that included the use of less-polluting solvents, more efficient application methods in a variety of operations and the use of alternative fuels.

In 1990, the California Legislature passed the California Clean Air Act (CCAA), which required all nonattainment air basins in the state (including the SCAB) to develop new attainment plans to meet federal and state air quality standards.

The 1991 AQMP Revision sets forth programs which require the cooperation of all levels of government - local, regional, state, and federal. Each level is represented in the AQMP by the appropriate agency/jurisdiction that has the authority over specific emission sources. The 1991 AQMP Revision has also developed

emissions control strategies for stationary and mobile sources. This strategy is built on the attainment strategy contained in the 1989 AQMP. Local governments are responsible for implementing the transportation and land use measures in the AQMP.

Truck restriction and parking management, including policies to revise parking codes, are the only measures required by the 1991 AQMP for inclusion in an air quality element for a city without a large special event center. Bicycle routes which facilitate home/work commuting are required in a general plan, although not necessarily in an air quality element. Other measures can be implemented through adoption of ordinances at least as stringent as model ordinances to be developed by the SCAQMD.

The 1991 AQMP requires local governments to adopt ordinances for the following strategies:

- Person Work Trip Reduction
- Non-motorized Transportation
- Employer Rideshare and Transit Incentives
- Auto Use Restrictions
- Parking Management
- Merchant Transportation Incentives
- Auto Use Restrictions
- Truck Dispatching, Rescheduling and Rerouting

The SCAQMD declared its intent to adopt backstop rules that would be imposed in any city where implementation ordinances are determined by the SCAQMD to be inadequate. Additional local government measures, including control of emissions associated with new construction and reducing emissions from energy use, are also suggested in the AQMP. Measures for which the SCAQMD intends to adopt model ordinances are described below and summarized in Table 5-3.



TABLE 5-3 LOCAL ACTIONS REQUIRED OR RECOMMENDED BY 1991 AQMP			
AQMP Strategy	Ordinance		General Plan
	Required	Optional	
Alternative work weeks, telecommuting by government employees	X		
Alternative work weeks, telecommuting, trip reduction by local employers	X		
Telecommuting centers for new developments	X		
Set-aside local resident space for employers with multiple facilities	X		
Zoning and licensing to allow telecommuting and home employment	X		
Non-work trip reduction programs for special event centers	X		
Bicycle routes that support job and non-work trips			X
Parking for bicycles, showers and locker facilities for new commercial and industrial facilities	X		
Trip reduction plans for employers of 100 and buildings housing 100	X		
Support for Transportation Management Association formation		X	
Parking management practices			X
Revised parking codes			X
Clean Streets Program	X		
Auto-free zones for special event centers (where applicable)			X
Customer mode-shift incentives for large retail establishments	X		
Improved truck routing, delivery scheduling and shipping and receiving plans	X		X
Supplemental development standards	X		



TABLE 5-3 LOCAL ACTIONS REQUIRED OR RECOMMENDED BY 1991 AQMP (continued)			
AQMP Strategy	Ordinance		General Plan
	Required	Optional	
Actions to facilitate transit for regional shopping centers	X		
Local implementation of Regulation XV		X	
Source: South Coast Air Quality Management District. 1991 AQMP Appendices IV-C and IV-E.			

### Air Quality Characteristics

Tables 5-4 and 5-5 summarize historical concentrations of selected pollutants for the

Lynwood monitoring station and the number of days emissions exceeded both federal and state standards from 1985 to 1990.

TABLE 5-4 NUMBER OF DAYS FEDERAL EMISSION STANDARDS EXCEEDED LYNWOOD MONITORING STATION								
Year	Carbon Monoxide/1 Maximum Concentration in PPM		Ozone/1 Maximum Concentration in PPM		Sulfur Dioxide/3 Maximum Concentration in PPM		Suspended Particulates/4 Maximum Concentration in ug/m3	
	1-hour	Days*	1-hour	Days*	1-hour	Days*	24-hours	Days*
1985	19	0	0.31	79	0.07	0	NM	NM
1986	14	0	0.24	79	0.03	0	NM	NM
1987	12	0	0.28	63	0.09	0	NM	NM
1988	14	0	0.30	67	0.05	0	NM	NM
1989	13	0	0.26	61	0.04	0	NM	NM
1990	13	0	0.19	43	0.04	0	NM	NM
* Number of days standard was exceeded. /1 Federal Standard for Carbon Monoxide: 35 ppm 1-hour; 9.5 ppm 8-hours /2 Federal Standard for Ozone: 0.12 ppm 1-hour /3 Federal Standard for Sulfur Dioxide: 0.14 ppm 24-hours /4 Federal Standard for Suspended Particulates (PM <sub>10</sub> ): > 50 ug/m3 24 hours Number of samples for suspended particulates varies annually. NM Pollutant not monitored								
Source: South Coast Air Quality Management District, "Air Quality Data," 1985-1990.								





TABLE 5-5  
NUMBER OF DAYS STATE EMISSION STANDARDS EXCEEDED  
LYNWOOD MONITORING STATION

Year	Carbon Monoxide/1 Maximum Concentration in PPM		Ozone/1 Maximum Concentration in PPM		Nitrogen Dioxide/3 Maximum Concentration In PPM		Sulfur Dioxide/4 Maximum Concentration in PPM	
	1-hour	Days*	1-hour	Days*	1-hour	Days*	1-hour	Days*
1985	19	0	0.31	4	0.07	4	0.07	0
1986	14	0	0.21	1	0.03	1	0.03	0
1987	12	0	0.28	0	0.09	0	0.09	0
1988	14	0	0.30	0	0.05	0	0.05	0
1989	13	0	0.26	61	0.04	0	NM	NM
1990	13	0	0.19	2	0.04	2	0.04	0
* Number of days standard was exceeded. /1 State Standard for Carbon Monoxide: 20 ppm 1-hour; 9.0 ppm 8-hours /2 State Standard for Ozone: 0.10 ppm 1-hour /3 State Standard for Nitrogen Dioxide: 0.25 ppm 1-hour /4 State Standard for Sulfur Dioxide: 0.05 ppm 24-hours								
Source: South Coast Air Quality Management District, "Air Quality Data," 1985-1990.								

### Effects of Pollution

High concentrations of pollutants pose health problems for the general population, particularly young children playing outdoors, the elderly, and the sick. Thus, areas where these people congregate are considered sensitive receptor areas and include schools, parks, hospitals,

convalescent homes and nursing homes. Typical health problems attributed to smog include respirator ailments, eye and throat irritations, headaches, coughing, and chest discomfort. The sources and health effects of the major air pollution constituents are summarized in Table 5-6.

TABLE 5-6  
AIR POLLUTION EFFECTS

Pollutant Type	Description	Effects	Sources
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	Colorless, odorless, toxic gas produced by incomplete combustion of carbon-containing substances.	Passes through lungs into bloodstream. Deprives sensitive tissue of oxygen. Not known to have adverse effects on vegetation, visibility or material objects.	Gasoline-powered motor vehicles.



TABLE 5-6  
AIR POLLUTION EFFECTS (continued)

Pollutant Type	Description	Effects	Sources
Oxides of Nitrogen (NO <sub>x</sub> )	Two types, Nitric Oxide (NO), and Nitrogen Dioxide (NO <sub>2</sub> ). NO is a colorless, odorless gas formed when combustion takes place under high pressure and/or temperature. NO <sub>2</sub> forms by combustion of NO and oxygen. Participants in photochemical smog reactions.	Irritating to eyes and respiratory tract. Colors atmosphere reddish-brown.	Motor vehicles primary source. Other sources: Petroleum refining operations, industrial sources, ships, railroads, aircraft.
Sulfur Oxides (SO <sub>x</sub> )	Colorless, pungent gas formed by combustion of sulfur-containing fossil fuels.	Irritates upper respiratory tract; injurious to lung tissue. Can yellow the leaves of plants, destructive to marble, iron and steel. Limits visibility and reduces sunlight.	Fuel combustion primary source. Other sources: chemical plants, sulfur recovery plants, and metal processing.
Photochemical Oxidant	Consists primarily of ozone. Created in atmosphere, not emitted directly, during photochemical process. Ozone is a pungent, colorless toxic gas.	Common effects are damage to vegetation and cracking of untreated rubber. High concentrations can directly affect lungs, causing irritation.	Motor vehicles major source of emission of oxidants of nitrogen and reactive hydrocarbons, which are ozone precursors.
Particulates	Made up of finely-divided solids or liquids such as soot, dust, aerosols, fumes, and mists.	May irritate eyes and respiratory tract. Absorbs sunlight, reducing amount of solar energy reaching the earth. Produces haze and limits visibility. Can damage materials.	Dust and fume-producing industrial and agricultural operations, construction, combustion products including exhaust, atmospheric photo-chemical reactions. Natural activities such as wind-raised dust and ocean spray.
Hydrocarbons and Other Organic Gases	Includes the many compounds consisting of hydrogen and carbon, found especially in fossil fuels. Some highly photochemically reactive.	Not known to cause adverse effects in humans. May damage plants.	Motor vehicles major source. Other sources: petroleum refining, petroleum marketing operations, and evaporation of organic solvents.
Source: South Coast Air Quality Management District, "Air Quality handbook for Preparing Environmental Impacts Reports: Revised April, 1987."			

## Cultural Resources

## Historical Resources

The Los Angeles Basin, including parts of the San Gabriel Mountains, and the San Clemente, San Nicholas and Santa Catalina Islands were pre-historically occupied by the Gabrieliño Indians. The Gabrieliños migrated into the Los Angeles coastal areas in 500 B.C. They lived in small

villages near streams and along sheltered portions of the coast. They did not have permanent dwellings and survived on hunting, gathering, and fishing.

The Spaniards established missions in the area in the 1770's and the Gabrieliño Indian population started to decline. The Spaniards brought agriculture and cattle into Los Angeles and the missions became the population centers in the



region. The City of Bell Gardens was once part of the 29,500 acre Rancho San Antonio which was granted to Antonio Maria Lugo, a Spanish soldier, in 1810. Lugo established a ranch near the fork of the Rio Hondo and Los Angeles Rivers. In 1822, the Mexican government took control of the area and large land holdings were divided into ranches. After the depression, O.C. Beck, a land developer, offered the land for \$20 down and \$10 per month. As a result, the Lugo Ranch was divided into many small farms and ranch homes. The early twentieth century marked the industrial growth of the area as commerce, industry, and a migrant population came to Los Angeles.

Bell Gardens has several historic structures within its boundaries which may be considered as resources worthy of preservation. A number of important structures are called out in the City's General Plan as historically significant. These include the following:

- **Old Specht Home - 6410 El Selinda Avenue.** This home was built in 1894 and was moved to its present site from Gage Avenue, because it was replaced by a large house in the 1930's. The newer house has given way to school property and now sits at 5815 Loveland Street. Both are private residences.
- **Site of the Laguna School - North Side of Gage Avenue.** The Laguna School was the first public school facility available to Bell Gardens' residents and was located in the City of Bell Gardens on Gage Avenue. Although it was demolished in 1957, the historic significance of the site remains.
- **Governor Gage Mansion - 7000 East Gage Avenue.** This home was built in 1810 by Antonio Lugo with adobe walls covered with redwood siding. It was also the family home of Henry Tift Gage, the 20th Governor of California.

Today the house is a private residence and is being restored.

- **Woodworth House - 6820 Foster Bridge Boulevard.** This structure was built in 1924 in an earlier style to accommodate fixtures from an earlier structure which was being demolished. The house is owned by the City and is open to the public.

- **Peterson House - 7535 Perry Road.** The Peterson House was built in 1906 as a farm house. The windmill and well house (no longer in use) and former solar heating system attest to the builder's independence. It is now a private residence still in the Peterson family.

Other important structures and sites in the City include the Barberino House (1913) at the northeast corner of Priory and Jaboneria and the Clara Street Water Company (1920) at Priory Street.

#### ***Paleontological Resources***

With the City nearly builtout, the discovery of paleontological resources is unlikely. Records of known sites do not indicate the presence of resources in the City or the surrounding area. The Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History has indicated that the entire City of Bell Gardens has a low potential and sensitivity for paleontological resources.

#### ***Archaeological Resources***

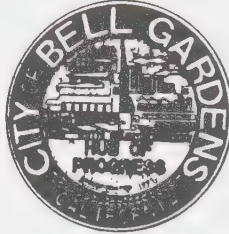
A record search at the UCLA Archaeology Center showed that no prehistoric or historic sites were identified within the City. No archaeological surveys were done in the City, thus, no sensitive sites have been found. A low potential for archaeological resource discovery is expected in the area. However, the Nehemiah West multi-family development (located on the old Lugo





Mansion site at 6360 East Gage Avenue) revealed over thirty artifacts buried there. These artifacts are currently being cleaned

for display and will be returned to the City. The site was once the headquarters house for the El Rancho San Antonio, constructed by Antonio Lugo.





# City of Bell Gardens GENERAL PLAN

## Section 6 Safety Element



## SECTION 6: SAFETY ELEMENT

### INTRODUCTION TO THE SAFETY ELEMENT

The focus of the Bell Gardens Safety Element, through its policies and programs, is to reduce the potential for loss of life, injury, property damage, and economic dislocation resulting from natural or manmade disasters. In addition, the Safety Element serves as the framework for crime reduction and emergency preparedness planning which may be undertaken in the future. Finally, the Safety Element outlines those public safety issues that will need to be considered as part of the implementation of land use and development policy provided for in this General Plan.

The Land Use Element is often referred to as the "most important general plan element."

However, the Safety Element is concerned with the health and welfare of persons living, working, and visiting the City. The successful implementation of the Safety Element may result in a significant reduction in loss of life and injury.

A Safety Element is required under Section 65302(g) of the California Government Code and the State Planning and Zoning Law which states that:

*"A safety element (shall be required) for the protection of the community from any unreasonable risks associated with the effect of seismically induced surface rupture, ground shaking, ground failure, tsunami, seiche, and dam failure; slope instability leading to mud slides and landslides, subsidence, and other geologic hazards known to the legislative body; flooding and wild land and urban fires. The safety element shall include the mapping of known seismic and other geologic hazards. It shall also address evacuation routes, peak load water supply requirements, and minimum road widths and*

*clearances around structures, as those items relate to identified fire and geologic hazards."*

While the state law focuses on seismic risk, the Bell Gardens Safety Element has a broader scope that considers a wide range of natural and manmade hazards that could affect the City in the future. The Safety Element emphasizes the importance of crime reduction and emergency preparedness in reducing the potential for loss of life, injury, and property damage. An additional objective of the Safety Element is to implement programs that will help to avoid the creation of hazardous conditions. Finally, the Safety Element commits the City to make every effort possible to provide the community with safeguards towards a reduced crime environment.

The City of Bell Gardens Safety Element consists of the following sections:

■ ***Safety Element Policies and Programs.***

Individual policies related to public safety, along with supporting programs, are listed in this section. The Safety Element policies and programs provide the framework for the City's public safety commitment.

■ ***Safety Element Background Report.*** Existing conditions relative to potential risks, emergency preparedness, and public safety are summarized in this section.







## **SAFETY ELEMENT POLICIES AND PROGRAMS**

Bell Gardens is located in an urbanized setting and the risks and potential hazards include those that might be expected in any fully developed Southern California city. However, as fire and law enforcement officials can attest to, emergency situations typically result or lead to unforeseen consequences. For example, relatively moderate earthquakes in 1987 and 1994 resulted in significant loss of life and hundreds of millions of dollars of property damage in Los Angeles County. Also, the civil unrest in Los Angeles resulted in loss of life and property damage unparalleled in this nation's recent history and the resulting effects of economic dislocation continues to the present.

An area's ability to recover from a disaster is directly related to the level of emergency preparedness and emergency response. This Safety Element visualizes how Bell Gardens would be affected regarding the following scenarios which could occur sometime during this General Plan's implementation. The City has an adopted Multi-hazard Functional Plan for Emergency Operations that identifies the different levels of emergency management systems, continuity of government, authorities, hazard mitigation, and mutual aid agreements. It is the intent of this Safety Element to compliment and build upon the Multi-hazard Functional Plan policies and programs and to avoid duplication.

### ***Issue 1: Crime***

Crime prevention is of paramount concern in the City. The Bell Gardens Police Department is continuously implementing ways to deter crime and violence in the City through public awareness programs, security systems, patrol beats, problem-oriented policing, and a host of other activities. The main problem for the City is gangs and gang related violence. It is estimated

that at least fourteen known gangs are operating within the City of Bell Gardens. Approximately 15% to 20% of our youth are members or associated with these gangs. The average age of the typical gang member in Bell Gardens is approximately 15 years of age. These are sobering statistics.

***Policy 1:*** *The City of Bell Gardens shall provide for the safety of the community through physical planning and maintaining an adequate level of police, fire, and emergency services facilities.*

### ***Issue 2: Earthquakes and Fire***

The region is likely to experience a major damaging earthquake over the life of this General Plan. A moderate earthquake (Richter 6.5) along the Newport-Inglewood fault could be as damaging to the City as a major earthquake (8.1 Richter) along the San Andreas fault. One fact is certain, a major earthquake (6.5 to 8.0 Richter) will occur during the implementation period of this General Plan. Wildfire is also a common occurrence throughout Southern California. Urban fires can spread when weather conditions permit, as was the case in the Anaheim apartment fire where hundreds were made homeless. Following an earthquake, fires could be responsible for considerable damage.

***Policy 2:*** *The City of Bell Gardens shall minimize the loss of life, injuries, and property damage through continuing prevention, inspection, and public education programs, including continual update of the City's Emergency Preparedness Plan.*



**Issue 3: Hazardous Materials and Waste**

The advanced technology we depend on has not been without costs. In recent years, we have learned of the consequences associated with the improper handling of hazardous materials that are the byproducts of our region's prosperity. A spill of hazardous materials along a local freeway or in one of the City's industrial districts is likely to occur in the future.

**Policy 3:** *The City of Bell Gardens, through the County Fire Department, shall protect the community from hazardous materials and waste spills by identifying hazardous materials stored, utilized, or transported in the City and the City shall pursue local and state legislation for greater control of hazardous materials.*

The following programs implement the above three policies. The programs are identified with their corresponding policies in Table 6-1, following this section, because one program may support more than one policy.

**Anti-gang and Anti-drug Programs.** The City shall continue to support law enforcement efforts associated with anti-gang and anti-drug programs, such as the Youth Services Bureau, D.A.R.E., Metro Gang Task Force, and the School Resources Officer. These efforts will help reduce crimes in the City that are due to gang activity and drug abuse. The program also allows the use of confiscated property for increased anti-gang and anti-drug efforts.

**Timing:** Ongoing  
**Agency:** City Manager  
**Funding:** General Funding

**Emergency Preparedness Classes.** The City shall work with the Los Angeles Unified School

District, the Fire Department, and local law enforcement officials in offering classes on earthquake preparedness, fire prevention, crime prevention, hazard protection and other safety issues to school-age children and interested parties.

**Timing:** Late 1995  
**Agency:** City Manager  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Emergency Shelters.** The City shall maintain a list of available emergency shelters in the area. This shall include schools, auditoriums, gymnasiums, hospitals, and other structures which have large open areas to accommodate cots and provide mass care and emergency assistance. Additional structures shall be explored and agreements sought with property owners for the potential use of the facilities in cases of a disaster or emergency. The list of emergency shelters shall be made available to all residents, along with emergency facilities and evacuation routes. However, the location of shelters will change depending on the situation. This will inform them of the services available in the event of a city-wide disaster.

**Timing:** Late 1995  
**Agency:** Disaster Preparedness Department  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Evacuation Plan.** The City will prepare or revise the evacuation plan for areas subject to hazards associated with severe earthquake, flooding, and inundation.

**Timing:** Ongoing  
**Agency:** Disaster Preparedness Department  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Fire Access Standards.** The provision of adequate roadway widths will facilitate emergency response during a disaster. Roadway standards have been established by the County Fire





Department to ensure access for firefighting equipment to all areas in the City. The standards specify that every building should be accessible to Fire Department apparatus by way of access roadways with all-weather driving surface capable of supporting the imposed loads of fire apparatus of not less than 20 feet of unobstructed width, clear to the sky, and with adequate roadway turning radius. Fire lanes are needed when an exterior wall of a building is located more than 150 feet from a public vehicle access. Minimum driveway widths are required to be maintained clear at all times. Fire access standards are implemented by the Fire Prevention Bureaus during the plan check process.

**Timing:** Ongoing  
**Agency:** Fire Department  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Fireflow Capacity.** The City shall work with local water companies to determine the adequacy of emergency water in their systems. The City shall regularly monitor the pressure of existing fire hydrants to determine fireflow capacity for emergency situations. Any new development shall be required to upgrade fire hydrants, in order to supply the minimum fireflow needs of their service area.

**Timing:** Late 1995  
**Agency:** Fire Department  
**Funding:** General Funding

**Fire Prevention.** The City shall work with the County to promote fire prevention and fire safety programs. These programs shall include fire prevention and protection information and tips in the City newsletter and local newspapers, Fire Department and law enforcement officials' review of proposed building plans to solicit recommendations on fire protection, crime prevention, and other safety measures. The City shall also encourage periodic inspections by the Fire Department of existing structures, for

compliance with fire safety standards and practices.

**Timing:** Ongoing  
**Agency:** Fire Department  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Graffiti Removal.** The City shall develop guidelines for the landscaping of large areas of blank walls to hide and prevent vandalism and graffiti. It shall also establish a volunteer program for graffiti removal in public places and other areas throughout the City.

**Timing:** Ongoing 1995  
**Agency:** Community Development, Police  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Groundwater Wells.** Ground remediation is necessary to remove soil contamination and prevent future groundwater contamination. The City shall encourage continued monitoring of groundwater wells for potential groundwater contamination. Water quality at local wells shall also be monitored for contaminants. The City shall encourage and coordinate with other agencies on site remediation projects at the earliest possible time.

**Timing:** Ongoing  
**Agency:** Public Works Department  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Hazardous Materials Regulation.** The City shall encourage the implementation of the County's Hazardous Waste Management Plan. It shall maintain a current inventory of hazardous material users and generators and incorporate their emergency response programs into the City's Emergency Plan. It shall work with the County Fire Department in requiring hazardous materials users and generators to prepare safety procedures for responding to accidental spills and emergencies. The County Fire Department shall also work with local law enforcement officials in





regulating the transport of hazardous materials through the City. Hazardous waste facilities shall be regulated by the state and county in compliance with the siting criteria contained in the County Hazardous Waste Management Plan. The County Fire Department shall coordinate the disposal of small quantities of hazardous wastes from residences and businesses in the City.

**Timing:** Ongoing  
**Agency:** Fire Department  
**Funding:** County and General Funds

**Landlord/Tenant Drug and Gangs Information Booklet.** The Police Department currently issues this Information Booklet to inform landlords and tenants of their rights to protection from gangs and drug-related activities. The Booklet covers information ranging from discouragement techniques, screening of tenant applications, security techniques, and legal issues. The City shall continue and further the use of this Information Booklet.

**Timing:** Ongoing  
**Agency:** Police Department  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Location of Critical Facilities.** As part of the development review process, the City shall require the preparation of geologic studies prior to the approval of critical facilities (such as hospitals, schools, etc.), uses which involve the assembly of large numbers of people, large scale residential developments, and major commercial and industrial projects. The studies will help define the potential environmental impacts on earth and geology of new development, as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The environmental review process for proposed projects prior to approval analyzes impacts on other issue areas. Mitigation measures to reduce adverse impacts shall be made conditions of approval, along with the mitigation monitoring program.

**Timing:** Early 1995  
**Agency:** Community Development  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Multi-hazard Functional Plan.** The City has a Multi-hazard Functional Plan which outlines responsibilities and procedures to follow in the event of an emergency or city-wide disaster. It discusses the potential emergency situations in the City and outlines responsibilities for emergency preparedness and emergency response. Specific emergency functions and operations, available resources (fire stations, emergency shelters, hospitals and clinics, resource persons, etc.), and mutual aid agreements are also provided. The City shall regularly update and implement its Multi-Hazard Functional Plan for Emergency Operations. In order to keep City staff informed of their responsibilities, annual reviews and drills shall be performed. Also, a summary or pamphlet of the procedures and responsibilities shall be provided to involved individuals for easy reference. The City shall also include a disaster reconstruction plan in its Multi-hazard Functional Plan. The plan will outline measures to maintain control and organize operations after a disaster. It shall include responsibilities for clean-up, aid and funding acquisition, private development assistance, and other projects to minimize the economic and social disruption of the disaster.

**Timing:** Ongoing  
**Agency:** Disaster Preparedness Department  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Neighborhood Watch.** The City shall work with local law enforcement officials and residents in the formation of new neighborhood watch groups and crime prevention and awareness programs. This will increase private efforts to protect individuals and property through practical measures such as locking doors, security lighting, concealing valuables, etc.



**Timing:** Ongoing  
**Agency:** Police Department  
**Funding:** General Plan

**Neighborhood Youth Center/Gang Reduction Project.** The Bell Gardens Police Department currently works with the Neighborhood Youth Center to address the most pressing problems of gang violence in the Bell Gardens community. The Neighborhood Youth Center is located at 5856 Ludell Street (at El Selinda) and is staffed with community members, an on-site director, an assistant, and a part-time secretary. The director and assistant work with gang members, schools, parent groups, and community businesses to provide Bell Gardens youth with alternatives to gang activities.

**Timing:** Ongoing  
**Agency:** Police Department  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Police and Fire Protection Services.** The City shall regularly review the adequacy of law enforcement services and fire protection and emergency services in the City. This shall be part of the annual budget review of contracts with the County Fire Department and the local law enforcement officials. The City shall work with local law enforcement officials and the County Fire Department to correct any identified deficiencies. It shall also request that local law enforcement officials and the Fire Department to review proposed development plans. In this way, they can recommend measures that will decrease fire potential and crime and facilitate quicker response.

**Timing:** Ongoing  
**Agency:** City Manager  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Police Commission.** The City shall form a Bell Gardens Police Commission to oversee law enforcement activities and to make

recommendations on policy and program changes, where necessary.

**Timing:** Early 1996  
**Agency:** City Manager  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Promotional Program.** The City shall institute a program to promote service organizations in Bell Gardens.

**Timing:** Late 1996  
**Agency:** City Manager  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Public Information.** The City will construct a public information program on preventing hazards and responding to a disaster in conjunction with the existing Multi-hazard Functional Plan.

**Timing:** Ongoing  
**Agency:** Disaster Preparedness Department  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Safety Measures.** The City shall continue to use "Bell Gardens Now" and local newspapers to increase public awareness on safety, crime prevention, and fire prevention, earthquake preparedness and other practical safety measures. Also, it shall offer earthquake preparedness, first aid and CPR classes as part of the recreational and library programs in the City.

**Timing:** Ongoing  
**Agency:** Disaster Preparedness Department  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Structure Abatement.** The City should consider (as a significant factor in the selection of redevelopment project areas) the abatement of older, potentially dangerous structures. Primary consideration should be given to the abatement of structures which pose the highest seismic risk to the public. The City will also inspect critical public facilities for structural integrity.



*Section 6: Safety Element (continued)*

**Timing:** Late 1995  
**Agency:** Building Department  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Volunteer Program.** The City shall seek to utilize volunteers in disaster recovery programs and other emergency situations. It shall actively solicit for volunteers to serve the City during emergencies and offer a training program for these volunteers. All volunteer resources persons shall be included in the City's list of resources with their individual responsibilities.

**Timing:** Early 1995  
**Agency:** Fire and Police Departments  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Zoning Ordinance.** The City will enact ordinances for the evaluation and abatement of structural hazards (e.g., parapet ordinance and hazardous building ordinance requiring repair, rehabilitation, or demolition of hazardous structures following structural evaluation).

**Timing:** Ongoing  
**Agency:** Building Department  
**Funding:** General Fund

**TABLE 6-1  
 SAFETY ELEMENT POLICIES AND PROGRAMS MATRIX**

Policies	Programs
<i><b>Policy 1:</b> The City of Bell Gardens shall provide for the safety of the community through physical planning and maintaining an adequate level of police, fire, and emergency services facilities.</i>	Anti-gang and Anti-drug Programs Graffiti Removal Landlord/Tenant Information Booklet Neighborhood Watch Neighborhood Youth Center/Gang Violence Reduction
<i><b>Policy 2:</b> The City of Bell Gardens shall minimize the loss of life, injuries, and property damage through continuing prevention, inspection, and public education programs, including continual update of the City's Emergency Preparedness Plan.</i>	Emergency Preparedness Classes Emergency Shelters Evacuation Plan Fire Access Fireflow Capacity Fire Prevention Location of Critical facilities Multi-hazard Functional Plan Police and Fire Protection Services Safety Measures Volunteer Program
<i><b>Policy 3:</b> The City of Bell Gardens shall protect the community from hazardous materials and waste spills by identifying hazardous materials stored, utilized, or transported in the City and the City shall pursue local and state legislation for greater control of hazardous materials.</i>	Emergency Preparedness Classes Hazardous Materials Regulation Location of Critical facilities Multi-hazard Functional Plan Safety Measures Zoning Ordinance

Source: David Evans and Associates, Inc., March 1994.









## **SAFETY ELEMENT BACKGROUND REPORT**

This section discusses existing safety issues in the City of Bell Gardens including earthquake, fire, and flooding hazards. Crime, hazardous materials, and emergency services are also discussed. The City of Bell Gardens is fortunate not to be located on or near an earthquake fault although the City could be affected by the damaging effects of an earthquake, groundshaking or other seismic effects which could occur in the City. Bell Gardens is relatively flat and urbanized, posing no risk of landslides, soil erosion and wildland fire hazards. The safety issues relating to earthquakes, flooding, hazardous materials, crime and urban fires are discussed in the following sections.

### **Crime**

Crimes and other acts of violence undermine the sense of security and threaten public safety.

While individuals can take personal precautions to protect themselves from harm, the City provides police protection services.

The majority of crimes committed are burglaries, assaults, motor vehicle thefts and larcenies. Gang violence and drug trafficking are also special concerns in Bell Gardens.

The City of Bell Gardens has had its own Police Department since 1970. The Bell Gardens Police Department is responsible for police protection and law enforcement in the City. The Police Department is responsible for general law enforcement, traffic law enforcement, neighborhood watch programs, investigative and administrative support services, disaster planning, and special anti-drug and anti-gang programs.

The City has 88 Police Department employees, with 60 sworn officers. The Department is currently understaffed by 4 sworn officers. With a population of 42,355 (1990 U.S. Census), the City has a force of 1 officer per 756 residents. This statistic is compared to surrounding cities in Table 6-2.

Per capita expenditures for the same cities are compared in Table 6-3.

**TABLE 6-2  
POLICE FACILITIES COMPARISON**

City	Population (1990 U.S. Census)	Sworn Officers	1 Officer Per Population
Bell Gardens	42,355	56	756
Maywood	27,850	23	1,211
Bell	34,365	40	859



**TABLE 6-2**  
**POLICE FACILITIES COMPARISON (continued)**

City	Population (1990 U.S. Census)	Sworn Officers	1 Officer Per Population
South Gate	86,284	91	948
Downey	91,444	124	737
<p>Note: The County figures were not compared, because the number of County sworn officers service the unincorporated areas as well as the cities that the County contracts with. This would have presented skewed data for the purposes of this comparison.</p> <p>Source: David Evans and Associates, Inc., 1993.</p>			

**TABLE 6-3**  
**PER CAPITA EXPENDITURES**

City	Population (1990 U.S. Census)	\$ Allocated to Public Protection	\$ Per Capita
Bell Gardens	42,355	4,903,397	116
Maywood	27,850	2,720,550	98
Bell	34,365	5,345,296	156
South Gate	86,284	11,977,894	139
Downey	91,444	21,698,152	237
<p>Note: The County figures were not compared, because the amount allocated for the County goes to unincorporated areas and towards the cities that the county contracts with. This would have presented skewed data for the purposes of this comparison.</p> <p>Source: David Evans and Associates, Inc., 1993.</p>			

Tables 6-4 lists reported crimes in Bell Gardens from 1989 to 1992, according to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) categories. The majority of crimes committed are larceny, followed by assaults and burglaries. [Note: larceny is the illegal taking of property; assault is

the threat of doing harm without the actual doing of the harm; battery is the actual doing of the harm; burglary is the act of breaking into a building with the intent to steal; robbery is larceny by violence or threat.]



*Section 6: Safety Element (continued)*

**TABLE 6-4  
FBI CRIME STATISTICS - 1989-1992**

Year	Homicide	Rape	Robbery	Assault	Burglary	Larceny	Vehicle Theft	TOTAL
1989	3	10	214	641	602	731	385	2,588
1990	7	19	205	536	594	700	339	2,390
1991	6	12	209	616	489	691	342	2,365
1992	5	16	238	550	608	804	366	2,587

Source: Bell Gardens Police Department, 1993.

The following Table 6-5 summarizes the City's crime statistics from 1988 through 1991 according to the nine major offenses,

miscellaneous offenses, traffic incidents, and other City ordinance violations.

**TABLE 6-5  
CITY CRIME STATISTICS**

OFFENSE		1988	1989	1990	1991
MAJOR OFFENSES	Homicide	3	5	8	6
	Forcible Rape	14	10	8	12
	Robbery	152	211	202	211
	Felony Assault	265	209	58	83
	Domestic Violence	263	234	182	202
	Burglary	675	674	644	518
	Grand Theft	96	98	113	107
	Auto Theft	321	404	367	359
	Arson	11	5	9	8
	Subtotals	1800	1850	1591	1506
MISCELLANEOUS OFFENSES	Other Assaults	166	236	314	355
	Fraud Document	63	59	71	104
	Drugs	347	221	201	148
	Firearms	71	51	73	92
	Disturbing the Peace	53	38	45	71
	Sex Offense/Children	n/a	11	41	39
	Sex Offense/Exposure	n/a	13	35	29





*Section 6: Safety Element (continued)*

**TABLE 6-5  
CITY CRIME STATISTICS**

OFFENSE		1988	1989	1990	1991
	Sex Offense	77	33	23	5
	Vandalism	323	9	61	571
	Petty Theft	350	412	484	724
	Public Intoxication	617	677	623	364
	Drunk Driving	285	257	234	210
	Other arrests	253	661	903	1247
	Burglary/Vehicle	224	174	166	174
	Miscellaneous	1017	758	807	760
	Subtotals	3846	4020	4381	4893
TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS	Property Damage	755	691	745	640
	Injury Accidents	274	324	262	220
	Fatal Accidents	3	2	3	4
	Hit & Run Accidents	255	293	293	245
	Subtotals	1032	1017	1303	864
OTHER TRAFFIC	Hazardous Cites	8055	9174	10635	9196
	Non-hazardous Cites	371	163	212	99
	Parking Cites	11045	8002	7861	7157
	Storage/Impounds	158	542	208	194
	Subtotals	20629	17881	18916	16646
OTHER CITY ORDINANCES	Alarm Violations	1002	846	901	885
	Other Violations	915	22	124	252
	Subtotals	1917	868	1025	1137
TOTALS CALLS FOR SERVICE		19853	20308	20048	20248
Source: City of Bell Gardens Police Department, 1993.					

Table 6-5 shows that the majority of crimes in the major offenses category consisted of burglaries and auto theft, followed by domestic violence, felony assaults, and robberies. The majority of miscellaneous offenses included

public intoxication, petty theft, drugs, drunk driving, and other types of assaults. The discrepancies between the FBI statistics and the City statistics may be attributed to the difference in categorization techniques.



## **Gangs**

The main crime problem for the City, as identified by the Police Department, is gangs and gang related violence. In the Police Department's Neighborhood Youth Center Proposal, it was estimated that "...at least fourteen known gangs are operating within the City of Bell Gardens. Approximately 15% to 20% of our youth are either members or associates of these gangs. The average age of the typical gang member in Bell Gardens is approximately 15 years of age. However, it is not unusual for the fathers or even grandfathers of youthful gang members to still have ties with gang activities in their neighborhoods."

The Police Department has implemented four programs specific to curb gang related activities in the City. These programs are: (1) the 4-man police gang unit; (2) the Neighborhood Youth Center; (3) the Youth Services Bureau; and (4) D.A.R.E.

The 4-man Gang Unit was started one year ago and is made up of police detectives. It is a high profile enforcement group that works during peak gang related hours (Thursday through Sunday).

The Neighborhood Youth Center is considered an alternative program that targets high risk juveniles. The staffing thus far consists of 2 full-time ex-gang members (one of which serves on the Governor's Task Force on Gangs) and other staff and volunteers. The program has been in effect since November 1992 and is reportedly well received by the community.

The City's Youth Services Bureau originated with a state grant. It is a diversion program for first-time offenders, light felons, etc. The Youth Services Bureau also maintains crisis intervention. The Youth Services Bureau is located at 5840 Florence Avenue and is staffed with three full-time counselors and a secretary. Counseling is

provided at no cost to residents of the community. Youth, parent, family, and crisis counseling is available. First time juvenile offenders of non-violent crimes are referred for counseling by the Police Department. The local schools also refer youth for counseling that they have identified as having behavioral problems.

The Drug Abuse Resistance Education program is provided to youth at the elementary and intermediate schools. The D.A.R.E. program is made up of three full-time police officers who have been trained to teach this program. There are two additional police officers who teach D.A.R.E. to all fifth grade students attending the intermediate schools in Bell Gardens. One officer teaches an abbreviated D.A.R.E. program, pedestrian and bicycle safety. The officers also teach at private schools.

In an attempt to provide reinforcement to the D.A.R.E. program taught in the lower schools, one full-time police officer is assigned to the High School. This officer teaches classes, provides supervision, support to students, and acts as a role model. This officer also provides a link in communication between High School youth and the Police Department.

Additionally, the southeast Los Angeles region is served by the Metropolitan Gang Task Force (funded by a federal grant and staffed by local police officers) that has six participating cities: Bell Gardens, South Gate, Maywood, Bell, Vernon, and Huntington Park. Additionally, employees from the probation, parole and the District Attorney's office also participate. The resources of this Task force are available to the City to assist in suppressing and investigating gang related incidents.

In addition to the local narcotics unit, two police officers are assigned to L.A. Impact, a task force that targets major narcotic dealers. L.A. Impact is comprised of police officers from forty-five



agencies in Los Angeles County. The Task Force deals exclusively with major narcotic dealers in an effort to significantly reduce the narcotic problem in this area.

In an effort to reduce the number of traffic related injuries and deaths, a state grant was received that paid for a Driving Under the Influence checkpoint trailer. Each month, D.U.I. checkpoints will be established at various locations throughout the City. In addition to D.U.I. enforcement, the checkpoints allow the Police Department an opportunity to disseminate safety information and identify unlicensed drivers. Similar programs in other cities have reduced injury accidents by as much as 50%.

#### *Other Programs*

The City of Bell Gardens' Police Department has also implemented other programs to combat crime and serve the community. These programs are grouped into two categories: law enforcement programs and community service projects.

The law enforcement programs consist of three departmental programs to better address the City's needs: division reorganization, alternative work schedules, and fulfillment of staffing. Under the division reorganization program, "team policing" was established. This affords field officers the advantage of working with the same partners and supervisors, promoting effectiveness and team work. The division reorganization also established a Community Services Division to promote and administer six existing community programs, including Blockwatch. Finally, this program established anti-gang and anti-drug teams. These police teams function as proactive, street enforcement units.

The alternative work schedule enables Police Department personnel to work the "3/12" plan. This means that a police officer will work 3 days (12 hours each day). This has proved effective

for team policing, deploying personnel in emergency situations, reducing overtime and sick leave, increasing moral, and complying with the Air Quality Management District mandate. To fulfill staffing needs, last year 13 sworn police officer positions were filled (11 of which were bilingual). This also enables the Police Department to supply three times as many officers (during peak calls-for-service) as it did prior to June 1992.

Community Services Projects are administered by the Community Services Division (discussed above, under the division reorganization). In addition to the gang and drug related programs, the Community Services Division is responsible for three other projects: Blockwatch, the Explorer/Cadet program, and the Senior Citizens Service program. The Blockwatch program enables the community and the Police Department to establish an ongoing dialogue. The Police Officers meet with citizens at their homes, allowing the community to become familiar with the Department staff.

The Explorer/Cadet program consists of Explorer Post #673, which has recently been reactivated. Since it has been reactivated, membership has increased from 5 persons to 25 persons, between the ages of 14 and 19 years. The explorers participate in a number of community service projects, outings, and other recreational activities.

The Police Department also began a Community Academy. The Community Academy is open to any resident or business person in the City provided they have no felony convictions. The purpose of the Community Academy is to educate the participants on the operation of the Police Department, legal constraints, open lines of communication, and inform residents on how the community can work together to solve problems facing the City. The first Community Academy class graduated on March 30, 1994.





The Senior Citizens Service program established a daily dialogue with the City's seniors at the Senior Center and three convalescent hospitals in the City. The uniformed police officers maintain an established communication with the seniors, soliciting input regarding their particular issues in the community.

### Seismic Risk

Los Angeles County has approximately 50 active and potentially active faults, twenty one of which are major active faults (an active fault is defined as a fault that has exhibited movement during the past 10,000 years). The presence of these faults has caused at least one earthquake every four years rendering the City of Bell Gardens as highly susceptible to earthquakes. Potentially active faults in the vicinity of the project area include the Whittier-Elsinore, Norwalk, Raymond, Santa Monica, Sierra Madre, Verdugo, Palos Verdes, Newport-Inglewood, and San Andreas faults.

Exhibit 6-1 shows the location of regional faults in relation to Bell Gardens. A maximum credible earthquake is the largest earthquake magnitude a fault is capable of generating. Magnitude is the size of the earthquake as expressed in terms of the Richter scale: a measure of the vibrations of the ground which represents the amount of energy released by the earthquake. On a logarithmic scale, a magnitude of 6 is ten times as large as a magnitude of 5, and a magnitude of 8 is ten times as large as a magnitude of 7. The probability of a maximum credible earthquake is expressed as a percentage of probability within a 100-year period and is based on the known slip rate of the fault and time elapsed since the last earthquake. The San Andreas Fault has the highest probability and magnitude of faults in the area with the San Fernando Fault having a relatively high probability. The nearest faults to Bell Gardens are the Newport-Inglewood and the Whittier-Elsinore Faults. Their probabilities are 7% and 13% within a 100-year period. Table 6-6 summarizes the size and probability of major earthquakes along these faults.

**TABLE 6-6  
SELECTED EARTHQUAKE FAULTS IN THE REGION**

Fault and Zone	Maximum Credible Earthquake	Probability*	Approximate Distance from City
San Andreas			66 miles
Mojave	7.5	77.0	
Carrizo	8.0	30.0	
San Bernardino	7.5	77.0	
San Gabriel			41 miles
Northwest	7.0	3.0	
Central	6.7	5.0	
San Fernando	6.5	30.0	38 miles
Mission Hills	6.3	?	73 miles
Santa Susana	6.9	15.0	54 miles
Northridge	6.6	?	46 miles



**TABLE 6-6**  
**SELECTED EARTHQUAKE FAULTS IN THE REGION (continued)**

Fault and Zone	Maximum Credible Earthquake	Probability*	Approximate Distance from City
Sierra Madre			29 miles
Segment A	6.4	2.0	
Segment B	6.5	2.0	
Segment C	6.5	2.0	
Segment D	6.5	2.0	
Cucamonga (Sierra Madre Segment E)	6.6	2.0	42 miles
Whittier	7.3	13.0	17 miles
Verdugo	6.7	?	27 miles
Raymond Hill	6.7	3.0	24 miles
Hollywood	6.4	6.09	23 miles
Santa Monica	6.7	?	22 miles
Malibu Coast	6.9	2.0	37 miles
Newport-Inglewood			6 miles
Long Beach	6.8	7.0	
Central Los Angeles	6.9	6.0	
Palos Verdes	6.7	3.0	17 miles
San Pedro Basin	> 7.0	?	31 miles
Norwalk	6.5	?	10 miles
* Percentage probability of maximum credible earthquake in a 100-year period.			
Source: Los Angeles County Safety Element, 1990 as taken from Davis (1988), Wesnousky (1986), Ziony and Yerkes (1985), Crook, et.al. (1987) and Clark, et.al. (1985).			

The Newport-Inglewood Fault system is located approximately 8 miles west of Bell Gardens at its nearest point and consists of a series of northwest-trending, strike-slip faults. The 1933 Long Beach earthquake, with a magnitude 6.3, and the 1920 Inglewood earthquake, with an estimated magnitude 4.7, occurred on faults located within the Newport-Inglewood Fault system. The Newport-Inglewood Fault is expected to be capable of a maximum credible earthquake of Richter magnitude 6.8 to 6.9.

The Whittier-Elsinore Fault lies approximately 6 miles east of the City. Historically, this fault has produced relatively minor earthquakes (less than 4.5 Richter magnitude). According to seismologists, the Whittier-Elsinore Fault can produce a maximum credible earthquake of Richter magnitude 7.3.

The Sierra Madre Fault zone is located at the base of the San Gabriel Mountains, approximately 29 miles north of the City at its closest point. The Sierra Madre Fault system









consists of a series of east/west-trending faults. The San Fernando segment of the Sierra Madre Fault zone produced the magnitude 6.6 San Fernando earthquake in 1971. A 1991 earthquake on the fault had a magnitude of 5.8 and an epicenter 7 miles north of Monrovia.

Seismologists believe that the recurrence interval (time period between earthquakes on the same fault system as estimated by slip rates and historic events) at any one point on this fault ranges from 200 to 5,000 years.

The Norwalk Fault, located approximately 8 miles east of the City, is a north-dipping reverse fault and is capable of producing an earthquake of the magnitude of the 1933 Long Beach earthquake (6.25 on the Richter scale).

The San Andreas Fault is the boundary between the North American and Pacific Plates and extends as far north as Cape Mendocino and south to the Gulf of California. The San Andreas Fault is a major northwest-trending fault which is located approximately 66 miles northeast of Bell Gardens. Relative movement of the plates causes earthquakes at various points along this 750-mile fault. The San Andreas fault is classified as active, with the most recent earthquake on its central section occurring in 1857 with an approximate magnitude of 7.9 on the Richter scale. The recurrence interval on the central portion of the San Andreas is estimated to be between 126 to 300 years. The San Andreas

is assumed to be capable of producing a maximum credible earthquake of Richter magnitude 8.0.

A recent significant seismic activity in the Southern California region occurred along a previously unknown fault near Montebello. The earthquake, which occurred October 1, 1987, had an estimated Richter magnitude of 5.9. The epicenter of this earthquake was located in the vicinity of Whittier Narrows between Rosemead and Montebello. Scientists have recently reported a similar deep fault underlying the City of Los Angeles in the vicinity of downtown Los Angeles (Elysian Park). This fault is at a depth of approximately 5 miles and may be capable of producing an earthquake with a Richter magnitude of 7.0 or more (Harksson et al, 1988). The probability of an earthquake occurring on the potentially active Raymond Hill, Norwalk, Verdugo, or Malibu Coast-Santa Monica-Hollywood Faults are considered low. The faults considered to be the most likely sources of strong groundshaking at Bell Gardens during an earthquake are the Whittier-Elsinore, Newport-Inglewood, and San Andreas faults.

Table 6-7 identifies the historic earthquakes that have affected the region. Earthquakes prior to the 1933 Long Beach earthquake have been assigned approximate Richter magnitudes based upon historical accounts.

TABLE 6-7 HISTORIC EARTHQUAKES THAT HAVE AFFECTED THE AREA		
Date	Fault or Location	Richter Magnitude
1812	Newport-Inglewood-San Andreas	6.9
1857	San Andreas	7.9
1910	Elsinore?	6.0
1920	Newport-Inglewood	4.7
1925	Santa Barbara	6.8



**TABLE 6-7**  
**HISTORIC EARTHQUAKES THAT HAVE AFFECTED THE AREA (continued)**

Date	Fault or Location	Richter Magnitude
1929	Norwalk	4.7
1933	Newport-Inglewood (Long Beach)	6.3
1941	Newport-Inglewood	4.9
1941	Newport-Inglewood	5.4
1971	Sierra Madre (San Fernando)	6.6
1971	San Fernando	5.1
1979	San Bernardino Mountains	4.9
1987	Elysian Park-Whittier Narrows	5.9
1987	Elysian Park	5.3
1988	--	5.2
1988	Elysian Park	5.0
1989	Fault complex - Santa Monica Bay	5.0
1991	Sierra Madre	5.8
Note: Richter magnitudes for earthquakes prior to 1933 are estimated as based on historical accounts. Source: Los Angeles County Safety Element, 1990; Seismological Center, California Institute of Technology, 1992.		

### Groundshaking

A major earthquake occurring along any of the major fault traces in the region would be capable of producing strong groundshaking effects in Bell Gardens. Groundshaking is probably the most damaging result of an earthquake, because large areas are subject to shaking effects. This shaking motion can last for a few seconds in a moderate earthquake and can be as much as four minutes in a severe earthquake. Groundshaking is exaggerated on loose, water-saturated ground and occurs to a lesser magnitude on solid rock. Groundshaking is expected to occur with every earthquake, though the degree of movement is dependent on the distance from the epicenter (point on earth's surface directly above the area

where the earthquake energy originates), subsurface geology, and intensity of the earthquake.

While there are no active or potentially active faults in the City, groundshaking will affect Bell Gardens during earthquake events in the region. The maximum credible earthquake on nearby faults will generate average bedrock accelerations of approximately 0.25 gravity (the acceleration of gravity is equal to 32.2 ft/sec.<sup>2</sup> and is used to measure the acceleration of groundshaking) with a duration of 5 to 10 seconds. These accelerations can cause the structural failure of buildings and lead to other hazards such as fires, hazardous material spills, and damage to infrastructure (roads, water lines, sewer lines, gas lines, power



transmission lines, etc.). Groundshaking could cause the collapse of the bridges which cross over the Los Angeles River and the Long Beach Freeway. This could result in massive traffic jams in Bell Gardens as access to the west is impeded.

The vast majority of deaths and injuries in an earthquake are caused by partial or total collapse of man-made structures. Generally, existing substandard structures of all kinds pose the greatest hazard to a community. Unreinforced masonry buildings represent dangerous earthquake hazards, because such buildings are likely to experience significant structural damage in the event of a major earthquake. Other structures in the City that are subject to groundshaking hazards include: buildings with non-bearing walls and partitions; non-ductile concrete-frame buildings; inadequately designed pre-cast tilt-up construction; inadequately designed structures with geometric irregularities, including long spans and irregular shapes; mobile homes; and residences not secured to foundations.

The majority of existing structures in the City were constructed between 1930 and 1955. Although most are wood-frame construction of one and two stories, they may not meet present earthquake standards. Reinforcement or reconstruction to prevent potential earthquake damage to older structures should be encouraged.

### **Surface Rupture**

The majority of large earthquakes in California have been accompanied by surface rupture. Surface rupture refers to the actual fracturing of the ground surface along the fault trace. This type of fracturing can involve a sideways or horizontal displacement (lateral) or a vertical displacement. The 1857 Fort Tejon earthquake caused 21-foot displacements and the 1906 San Francisco earthquake had as much as a 20-foot offset. Sometimes the fault displacement occurs

in a gradual and continuous manner rather than with a single event characterized by most earthquakes. This slow, gradual movement is referred to as fault creep. Fault creep can damage structures that are built on top of fault traces. Surface rupture is not a significant hazard in Bell Gardens, because the nearest fault trace is 6 miles from the City.

### **Ground Failure and Liquefaction**

Various types of ground failures accompany earthquakes. These include landslides, fracturing, cracking and fissuring, liquefaction of sand layers, slumping, subsidence, uplift and tilting. Liquefaction is the process where soil behaves like liquid due to the loss of internal cohesive strength. Groundshaking from earthquakes (as discussed previously on page 6-5) can cause liquefaction and can result in horizontal ground movement and settlement. This, in turn, will cause structural failure and damage to pipes, roadways and buildings.

The City of Bell Gardens is located on alluvial soils deposited by the nearby Los Angeles River before it was channelized. The primary factors that govern an area's susceptibility to liquefaction are age and type of sedimentary deposit, penetration resistance, and depth to groundwater. Recent deposits are more susceptible to liquefaction since age and compaction increase with soil depth, thus, lessening liquefaction potential.

The youngest sediments in the region occur in the flood plain areas of the Los Angeles, San Gabriel, and Santa Ana Rivers which have been responsible for periodic flooding in the past 150 years. The City of Bell Gardens is underlain by late Holocene (past 1,000 years) alluvium consisting of silt, gravel, sand, and clay and is characterized by soils that were flooded historically by the Los Angeles River. These soils are highly susceptible to the effects of





liquefaction because they are not highly cemented. In addition, the groundwater is at relatively shallow depths ranging from 10 to 30 feet. In a comprehensive study of the earthquake risk in Southern California, Bell Gardens was found to be in an area with high to moderate risk for liquefaction (USGS, 1985). Past studies of the area classified the City with a very high potential for liquefaction due to perched groundwater. Pumping and subsequent overdrafting has caused the water table to lower, thereby reducing the risk of liquefaction. Areas with a high potential for liquefaction have groundwater levels at 10 feet or less below the ground surface. Areas with moderate liquefaction potential have groundwater levels at 10 to 30 feet below the ground surface.

#### **Other Seismic Effects**

Activity from fracturing, cracking and fissuring within the City of Bell Gardens would not be significant. Compaction, subsidence, uplift, tilting and warping are also considered insignificant in the area. Seiche and tsunamis will not affect the City of Bell Gardens because of it is 15 to 20 miles from the Pacific Ocean and because there are no significant bodies of water within or near the City. The City of Bell Gardens is relatively flat, thus, no landslide and soil erosion hazards can be expected.

#### ***Flooding (Dam Inundation)***

The relatively flat topography of the City and its location in relation to major regional flood control facilities reduce the likelihood of major damaging floods. According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, a small portion of the City of Bell Gardens is located in a designated 100 to 500 year flood zone.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers recently released inundation maps for the Hansen and Sepulveda Dams indicating the impacts of dam failure from these facilities. The studies indicated

that dam failure from the Sepulveda Dam (located approximately 27 miles northwest of the City) would result in flood waters with an average overbank depth (from the Los Angeles River) of 2 feet covering the entire City. The flood waters would reach the City in approximately 10 hours, with peak elevation occurring approximately 12 hours after dam failure. Dam failure from the Hansen Dam (located approximately 26 miles northwest of the City) would result in flood waters with an average overbank depth (from the Los Angeles River) of 1 foot covering those portions of the City south of Florence Avenue. The flood waters would reach the City in approximately 18 hours with peak elevation occurring approximately 21 hours after dam failure. The Army Corps of Engineering and the Federal Emergency Management Agency are currently evaluating the flood risk from the Rio Hondo Dam and levees in the vicinity of the Whittier Narrows.

The Los Angeles River is east of the City and has been constructed to withstand flooding potential in the area. Failure of the river channel is unlikely but stormwater overflow may occur. Exhibit 6-2 shows the flood hazard of the Los Angeles River.

#### ***Hazardous Materials***

The risks posed by the improper handling of hazardous materials include toxic pollution, contamination and associated health problems. Several laws and regulations have been recently passed to control hazardous materials use and disposal. Hazardous materials use and waste generation is generally related to industry and landfills. There are no operating landfills in Bell Gardens, but there are several industries who use and generate hazardous materials and waste. Numerous other industries in the neighboring



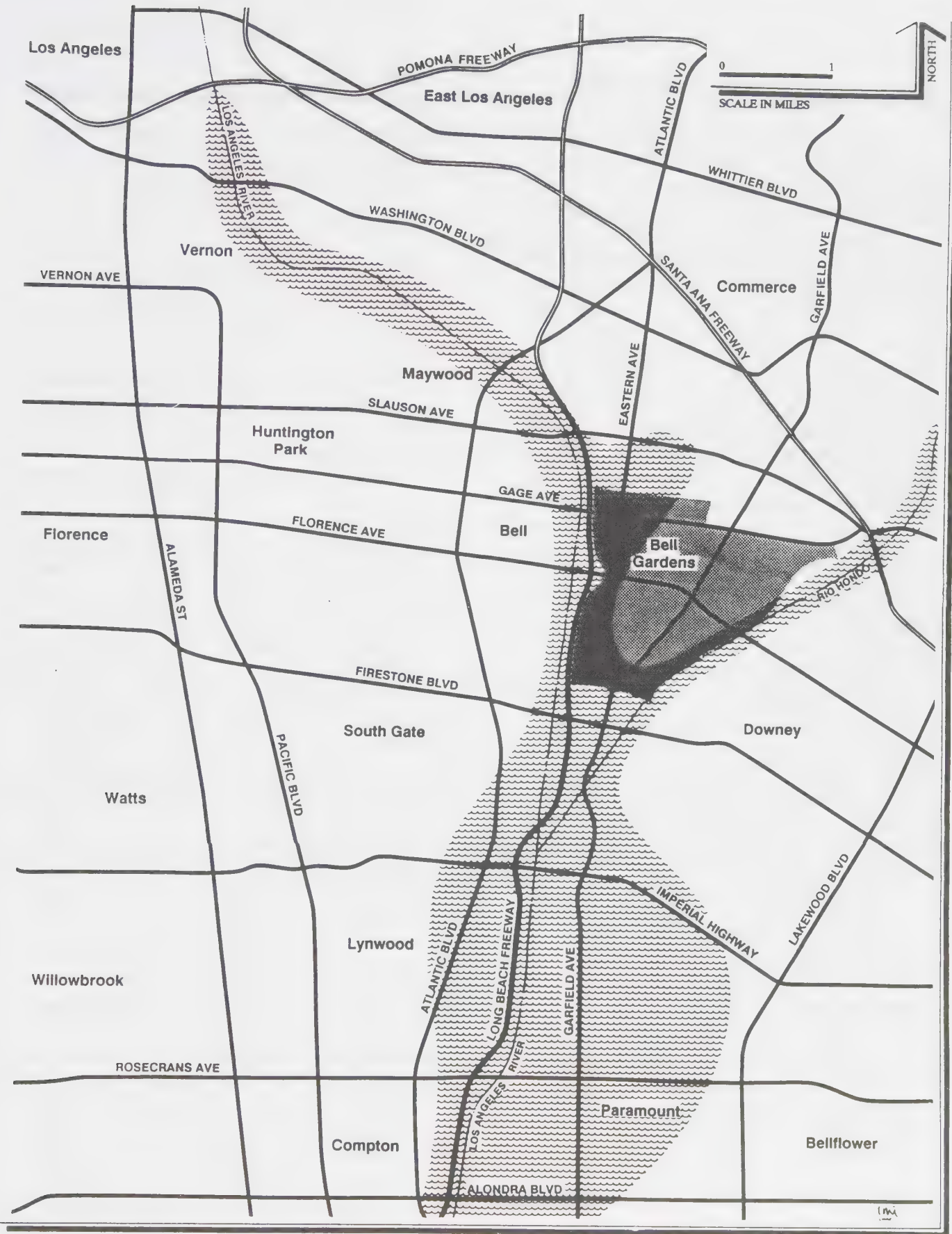


EXHIBIT 6-2  
LOS ANGELES RIVER FLOOD HAZARDS





cities of Bell, South Gate, Huntington Park, and Cudahy use or generate hazardous materials which could affect residents of Bell Gardens.

The hazardous materials area plan for Los Angeles County is implemented by the County Fire Department. The Fire Department has made an inventory of hazardous materials/ waste facilities, established emergency notification response and pre-emergency planning measures, and disseminates public safety information. Individual users are required to prepare risk management and prevention programs to keep employees aware of procedures necessary to prevent spills and to minimize risks during accidental spills.

Aside from on-site users, transportation routes present some risk for hazardous material spills. The Long Beach Freeway, west of the City, is a major route that is open to vehicles carrying hazardous materials. Aside from accidental spill, hazardous materials present fire and explosion hazards during transport. Transporters of hazardous wastes are required to be certified by the Department of Transportation and manifests keep track of hazardous materials during transport. Transporters are allowed within 1 mile of freeways and other designated routes for refueling and other services. City streets used for the transport of hazardous and toxic substances in and through the City include the designated truck routes of Florence, Gage, and Garfield Avenues, and a northern section of Eastern Avenue.

Railroads are also used for the transport of hazardous materials and wastes. Petroleum and chemical trains could be subject to spills, derailment and the related hazards of fire and explosion. Although only 5 to 7 trains pass on each track daily, the City and local enforcement officials can establish emergency response procedures for potential hazardous material/waste accidents.

Illegal hazardous material/waste dumping is a concern in the City. With increasing regulation and costs to dispose of hazardous materials, users and generators of the hazardous materials may resort to illegal dumping and disposal. There has been such incidents and monitoring activities could prevent future dumping and disposal within the City.

### ***Urban Fire***

The City is urbanized and no wildland areas are present in or near the City. As a result, fire hazards are largely related to structural fires. Urban fire hazards are presented by a variety of human activities and are often due to accidents, carelessness and negligence on the part of individuals engaged in activities that involve fire sources or electricity. Fires result from faulty wiring or mechanical equipment, accidents with appliances and equipment, cigarettes, matches and other fire sources. Fires are made worse by combustible construction materials and the absence of fire alarm and sprinklers systems.

Older structures are more prone to fire hazards since they often do not comply with current and more stringent standards for fire safety construction. Structures with open stairwells and no sprinklers also pose a fire hazard. Industrial areas, gas transmission lines and distribution lines and high voltage power lines are particularly sensitive to fire and could cause explosions.

To minimize fire hazards, the Fire Department sets standards for building design and construction. It requires adequate water supply for firefighting purposes, fire retardant construction, fire lanes and other standards. Fire prevention information and drills keep everyone aware of the prevention practices and ways to reduce loss and injury during a fire.





## ***Emergency Services***

### **Mutual Aid**

The City of Bell Gardens has adopted the Multi-Hazard Functional Plan for Emergency Operations in December 1990. The Plan addresses the City of Bell Gardens' "...planned response to extraordinary emergency situations associated with natural disasters, technological incidents, and nuclear defense operations." This section discusses this Plan along with the day-to-day operations of the various public service facilities.

The California Emergencies Services Act provides for the California Disaster and Civil Defense Master Mutual Aid Agreement. This Mutual Aid Agreement is a state-wide emergency planning and response system which creates a formal structure within which each jurisdiction retains control of its own personnel and facilities, but can give and receive help whenever it is needed. To facilitate the Mutual Aid Agreement, the state has been divided into six Mutual Aid Regions. Through these Mutual Aid Regions, the state can receive a constant flow of information from every geographic area in the state.

The City of Bell Gardens, being at the local level of the Mutual Aid Agreement, is responsible for:

- Developing and maintaining current Emergency Plans which are compatible with the California Emergency Plan and the California Master Mutual Aid Agreement, and are designed to apply local resources in meeting the emergency requirements of the immediate community or its neighbors, and coordinate such plans with those of neighboring jurisdictions to ensure mutual compatibility.
- Maintaining liaison with the appropriate Office of Emergency Services Mutual Aid Office and neighboring jurisdictions.

- Identifying Multi-purpose Staging Areas to provide rally points for incoming mutual aid and/or a staging area for support and recovery activities.
- Responding to requests for mutual aid.
- Dispatching situation reports to the appropriate Operational Area Coordinator and/or OES Mutual Aid Region as the emergency situation develops and as changes in the emergency situation dictate.
- Requesting assistance from neighboring jurisdictions, and/or the Operational Area, as necessary and feasible.
- Receiving and employing resources as may be provided by neighboring jurisdictions and state, federal, and private agencies.
- Carrying out emergency regulations issued by the Governor.

### ***Fire Department***

The Los Angeles County Fire Department provides fire prevention and protective services to Bell Gardens and the surrounding cities of Bell, Maywood, South Gate, Commerce, Cudahy, and Huntington Park. Fire Station 39 (located in Bell Gardens) provides initial response to the City. The station has an approximately 3-minute response time for fire emergencies. As part of the Consolidated Fire Protection District, the services of other county fire stations are available to Bell Gardens, as needed. Table 6-8 provides station resources and manpower.



TABLE 6-8 FIRE STATION RESOURCES AND MANPOWER		
Station & Address	Resources	Manpower
Station 39 7000 Garfield Avenue Bell Gardens	Engine 39	3
	Paramedic Squad 39	2
Station 163 6320 Pine Avenue Bell	Engine 163	4
	Paramedic Squad 163	2
Station 54 4867 Southern Avenue South Gate	Engine 54	4
Station 164 6301 S. Santa Fe Avenue Huntington Park	Engine 164	4
	Truck 164	4
	Paramedic Squad 164	2
Source: Los Angeles County Fire Department, 1991		

Bell Gardens has a fire hazard severity rating of 3 (on a scale of 1-10 with 1 as the best). This rating is based upon criteria set forth by the Insurance Service Office which considers three primary factors: fuel loading capacity (in terms of natural vegetation), fire weather (i.e., in terms of critical fire weather day frequency) and slope characteristics. The distance to the nearest fire station and fire hydrant is also considered in the rating. The fire hazard and severity rating for Bell Gardens is due primarily to light fuel materials and a relatively moderate number of critical fire weather days.

All future developments must comply with all applicable code and ordinance requirements for construction, access, water mains, fire flows, and fire hydrants. Residential developments will require fire flows of 1,250 gallons per minute for single-family detached homes and up to 3,000 gallons per minute for multiple-family residential developments. Commercial and industrial developments may require fire flows of up to 5,000 gallons per minute.

The water mains, located in the streets, must be capable of delivering these flows at 20 pounds per square inch residual pressure. Final fire flow will be based on the size of the building, its relationship to other structures and property lines, and the type of construction used. Any additional fire safety requirements will be addresses at the building plan check stage.

#### *Police Department*

As discussed earlier, the Bell Gardens Police Department is responsible for the police protection and law enforcement in Bell Gardens. The Police Department is responsible for general law enforcement, traffic law enforcement, neighborhood watch programs, investigative and administrative support services, disaster planning, and special anti-drug and anti-gang programs (Substance Abuse Narcotics Education is offered by the Sheriff's Department in city schools).



### *Clinic/Hospital Services*

There are no hospitals within the City of Bell Gardens. The nearest hospital is Mission Hospital on Florence Avenue in Huntington Park. It is a private hospital with approximately 100 beds. Other hospitals in the area are the Rancho Amigos Medical Center in Downey (which only handles disabled patients), the Los Angeles Community Hospital in East Los Angeles, the St. Francis Hospital in Lynwood and the Martin Luther King Hospital in Willowbrook. The Kaiser Permanente Medical Center was recently opened on Atlantic Avenue (in Cudahy) and provides immediate care and out-patient services to the City and neighboring communities. The

Family Center, at Gage and Garfield Avenues, is a community clinic that operates on an out-patient, by-appointment-only basis.

### *Critical Facilities*

Structures and facilities in the City of Bell Gardens which provide emergency planning and services should be located and constructed to withstand any major damage. This will ensure that they are functional during emergencies and are suitable as evacuation shelters. Structures which hold large groups of people or dependent populations are also considered critical facilities. Table 6-9 summarizes the critical facilities in Bell Gardens.

TABLE 6-9 CRITICAL FACILITIES	
Facility	Location
City Hall	7301 South Garfield Avenue
William Ross Auditorium	6662 Loveland Street
Maintenance Yard	6662 Loveland Street
Senior Citizens Center	6662 Loveland Street
Marlow Recreation Building	6640 Marlow Avenue
Los Angeles County Fire Station 39	7000 South Garfield Avenue
Southern California Edison Plant	6301 South Garfield Avenue, Commerce
John Anson Ford Park Auditorium	7840 Park Lane
Suva Elementary School	6740 Suva Street
Bell Gardens Elementary School	5620 Quinn Street
Del Rio Sanitarium	7002 Gage Avenue
Source: Multi-Hazard Functional Plan for Emergency Operations, City of Bell Gardens, 1990.	

### *Mass Care Facilities*

Emergencies or disasters in the City would require the evacuation of crowds and the

provision of temporary shelters. Mass care facilities that could serve the City of Bell Gardens include existing schools of the LAUSD and a





number of American Legion Halls. Table 6-10 lists these facilities and their capacities.

TABLE 6-10 EMERGENCY MASS CARE FACILITIES		
Facility	Address	Capacity
Gage Junior High School	2880 E. Gage Ave., Huntington Park	2,804
Nimitz Junior High School	6021 Carmelita Ave., Huntington Park	3,415
South Gate Junior High School	4100 Firestone Ave., South Gate	3,518
Bell High School	4328 Bell Ave., Bell	3,617
Huntington Park High School	6020 Miles Ave., Huntington Park	3,692
South Gate High School	3351 Firestone Blvd., South Gate	3,084
St. Mathias Parochial High School	6003 Stafford Ave., Huntington Park	349
American Legion Halls		
Bell-Maywood Post 120	3665 E. Florence Ave., Bell	53
Hollydale Post 723	11269 Garfield Ave., South Gate	59
South Gate Post 335	9535 California Ave., South Gate	59
Walnut Park Post 459	7627 Santa Fe Ave., Huntington Park	52
Source: Los Angeles County Fire Department, 1993.		





# City of Bell Gardens GENERAL PLAN

## Section 7 Noise Element



## SECTION 7: NOISE ELEMENT

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### INTRODUCTION TO THE NOISE ELEMENT

Every day, people are subjected to a multitude of sounds associated with common day-to-day activities. The effect noise will have on people generally depends on its loudness, duration, and the time of day. Individual annoyance and distraction are the most common effects of noise. Physical health, psychological stability, social cohesion, property values, and economic productivity can also be affected by excessive amounts of noise.

The State of California has mandated that local governments prepare a noise element as part of their general plans. California Government Section 65302(f) indicates:

*"A noise element shall identify and appraise noise problems in the community. The noise element shall recognize the guidelines established by the Office of Noise Control in the State Department of Health Services and shall analyze and quantify, to the extent practicable, as determined by the legislative body, current and projected noise levels..."*

Ambient noise levels can be illustrated through the use of noise contours. This way the Noise Element serves as a guide for development to minimize the potential for noise exposure. The Noise Element also indicates possible solutions that will be effective in addressing existing and foreseeable noise problems.

The Bell Gardens Noise Element consists of the following sections:

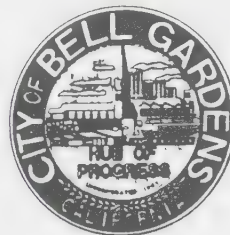
#### ■ **Noise Element Policies and Programs.**

This section indicates the issues, policies, and implementing programs that apply to both existing and anticipated noise levels in the City. The issues address problems such as roadway noise,

from the Long Beach Freeway, and protecting noise sensitive areas from increased noise levels.

#### ■ **Noise Element Background Report.**

This section of the Noise Element describes the existing noise conditions in the City.



### NOISE ELEMENT POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

The following issues and policies relating to noise have been identified for the City of Bell Gardens.

The Bell Gardens Noise Element policies are arranged around two key issue areas: land use compatibility and noise sources. The policies assist in the implementation of the City's vision for the future: "Pride of Community/Orgullo en la Comunidad".

#### **Issue 1: Land Use Compatibility**

Prolonged exposure to high noise levels cause irreversible hearing damage. There is growing evidence that noise may also have other physiological and psychological effects on humans. The nuisance of noise was once dismissed as being of little consequence. It is now recognized that the importance of maintaining the quality of life is impaired by noise pollution.

The Land Use Element identifies (through the land use designations) areas of existing and future potential noise sensitive receptors. These noise





sensitive receptors include: residential areas, schools, hospitals, and libraries (Exhibit 7-1 locates these uses).

In the City of Bell Gardens, these existing noise sensitive receptors are often located along major arterials and near, or within, industrial and commercial areas. The Long Beach Freeway, along the western boundary of the City, creates noise levels which are normally unacceptable to the adjacent residential, developments based on the application of Department of Housing and Urban Development Guidelines. Although Caltrans has constructed noise attenuation walls along the Long Beach Freeway corridor, noise levels in these residential areas should continue to be monitored.

**Policy 1:** *The City of Bell Gardens shall discourage the incompatible use of property along major transportation lines, and encourage noise reduction measures for existing uses.*

#### **Issue 2: Other Noise Sources**

Other sources of noise are of concern in the City of Bell Gardens, including airplane and railroad noise. There are existing railroad lines along the north and south boundaries of the City, although they are not main lines with high volumes of train traffic. Residential uses are located near the north rail line and manufacturing zones are located adjacent to the south rail line. Regularly scheduled freight switching movements do, however, take place on both lines twice per day.

While there are no airport facilities in the immediate vicinity of Bell Gardens, aircraft destined for the Los Angeles International Airport fly over the City, maintaining their approach route inbound to the airport. At Bell Gardens, these aircraft are at an altitude of 3,500 feet above ground level. Although aircraft noise is

noticeable at this altitude, it has not been found to be a health hazard or inconvenience to the residents of Bell Gardens.

**Policy 2:** *The City of Bell Gardens shall ensure that the noise caused by sources other than traffic (construction, etc.) are at acceptable levels.*

The following programs implement the above two policies. The programs are identified with their corresponding policies in Table 7-1, following this section, because one program may support more than one policy.

**Acoustical Analysis.** The City will require that new single-family and multiple-family residential units located within a CNEL contour of 60 dB or greater prepare an acoustical analysis as part of the project design. This analysis and noise control measures must indicate that the interior living space of the units will not exceed a CNEL of 45 dB.

**Timing:** Ongoing  
**Agency:** Building Department  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Barrier Construction.** The City will coordinate with Caltrans and any other appropriate agencies in effecting barrier construction or other measures designed to protect the citizens from excessive noise from traffic on the Long Beach Freeway.

**Timing:** Late 1995  
**Agency:** Public Works  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Building Codes.** The City will modify the building codes to require appropriate acoustical construction for all residential uses in noise-sensitive areas. For new developments, where appropriate, the City will require such features as sound-rated windows, additional insulation in



exterior walls or roofing systems, vent or mail slot modifications or relocation, and/or forced air ventilation to reduce sound propagation into the dwelling or structure.

**Timing:** Ongoing

**Agency:** Building Department

**Funding:** General Fund

**Department of Labor.** The federal and state governments have established noise guidelines and regulations for the purpose of protecting citizens from potential hearing damage and various other adverse physiological, psychological, and social effects associated with noise. The federal government specifically preempts local control of noise emissions from aircraft, railroads, and interstate highways, so as not to impose undue burden on interstate or foreign commerce. The first federal efforts regulating noise were issued by the Department of Labor in 1969 which established noise as an occupational health hazard. As a result, two legislative acts were adopted to regulate noise from industrial fixed-point sources resulting in hearing loss. The Walsh Healey Public Contracts Act (as amended) includes provisions for occupational noise regulations. The second legislative action, the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) of 1970, establishes noise exposure standards in the workplace. The City shall support the standards outlined in these regulations.

**Timing:** Late 1995

**Agency:** Police Department

**Funding:** General Fund

**Freeway Noise Affecting Classrooms.** California law regulates freeway noise that may affect classrooms. The law is designed to mitigate noise impacts to existing classrooms, libraries, multi-purposes rooms, and spaces used for pupil personnel services of a public or private elementary or secondary school. State-funded

noise abatement programs are required when freeway traffic or the construction of a freeway exceeds 55 dBA  $L_{10}$  or 52 dBA Leq. The temporary or permanent noise abatement program may include installing acoustical materials, eliminating windows, installing air conditioning, or constructing sound buffer structures. The City shall annually review school noise levels for compliance.

**Timing:** Ongoing

**Agency:** Building Department

**Funding:** General Fund

**Source Control.** The City will encourage control of noise at its source through: the adoption and enforcement of standards and ordinances, cooperation with other agencies, and support of legislative controls at the state and federal levels.

**Timing:** 1995

**Agency:** Community Development, Building

**Funding:** General Fund

**Train Noise Minimization.** The City will encourage the adjacent railroad users to minimize the level of noise produced by existing train movements. The City will also monitor any future expansion of railway operations, as they may further impact residential and other noise sensitive areas. The City shall monitor the existing operations on all three rail lines, as well as any plans for future developments. The railroad companies also need to be encouraged to provide noise attenuation features which became available as technological improvements evolve.



**Timing:** 1995  
**Agency:** City Manager  
**Funding:** General Fund

**Trash Collection Noise.** The City will support appropriate noise control measures for trash collection as part of the contract for services with the trash collecting company.

**Timing:** Late 1995  
**Agency:** City Manager  
**Funding:** General Fund

**U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).** HUD has adopted environmental criteria and standards for

determining whether or not mitigation is required for projects the agency is providing funds. HUD's overall goal is for exterior noise levels not to exceed 55 dB Ldn and for interior noise levels not to exceed 45 dB Ldn. However, for purposes of regulation and to meet other program objectives, exterior sound levels of 65 dB Ldn and below are acceptable and allowable. The City will work with HUD on their projects to maintain acceptable noise levels.

**Timing:** Ongoing  
**Agency:** Building and Housing  
**Funding:** General Fund

**TABLE 7-1  
 NOISE ELEMENT POLICIES AND PROGRAMS MATRIX**

Policies	Programs
<b>Policy 1:</b> <i>The City of Bell Gardens shall discourage the incompatible use of property along major transportation lines, and encourage noise reduction measures for existing uses.</i>	Acoustical Analysis Barrier Construction Building Codes Department of Labor Freeway Noise Affecting Classrooms Trash Collection Noise U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
<b>Policy 2:</b> <i>The City of Bell Gardens shall ensure that the noise caused by sources other than traffic are at acceptable levels.</i>	Department of Labor Train Noise Minimization Source Control
Source: David Evans and Associates, Inc., March 1994.	

## NOISE ELEMENT BACKGROUND REPORT

The Noise Element Background Report discusses the characteristics of noise, the existing noise environment in the City, and stationary and mobile sources of noise. This Background Report also summarizes state and federal guidelines for the control of noise levels.







### *Noise Sources*

The City of Bell Gardens, like most communities in the region, is subject to noise from a wide range of sources. These noise sources are typically classified as mobile or stationary sources. Mobile noise sources refer to freeway and roadway traffic, passing trains, and aircraft. Noise sources are stationary if they are not transportation-related and are generally emitted from machinery or equipment such as industrial equipment, air conditioners, loud music from stereos, machinery, and construction activities.

Roadway traffic is often the major source of noise in a community. As in Bell Gardens, vehicles travelling on City streets result in continuous background noise. The adjacent Long Beach Freeway is another major source of mobile noise which adds a constant hum of vehicles to the local environment. Intermittent train travel to the north and south boundaries of the City add to peak noise levels 5 to 7 times daily. Noise impact areas are shown in Exhibit 7-1.

Stationary noise sources in Bell Gardens are concentrated in the industrial and commercial sections of the City. Industrial activities may result in high noise levels at certain times when loud machinery is in operation. Commercial and business activities, clients and patrons are the main sources of noise along the Eastern Avenue commercial corridor. Schools also create their own type of noise from buses, students, school activities, and outdoor games.

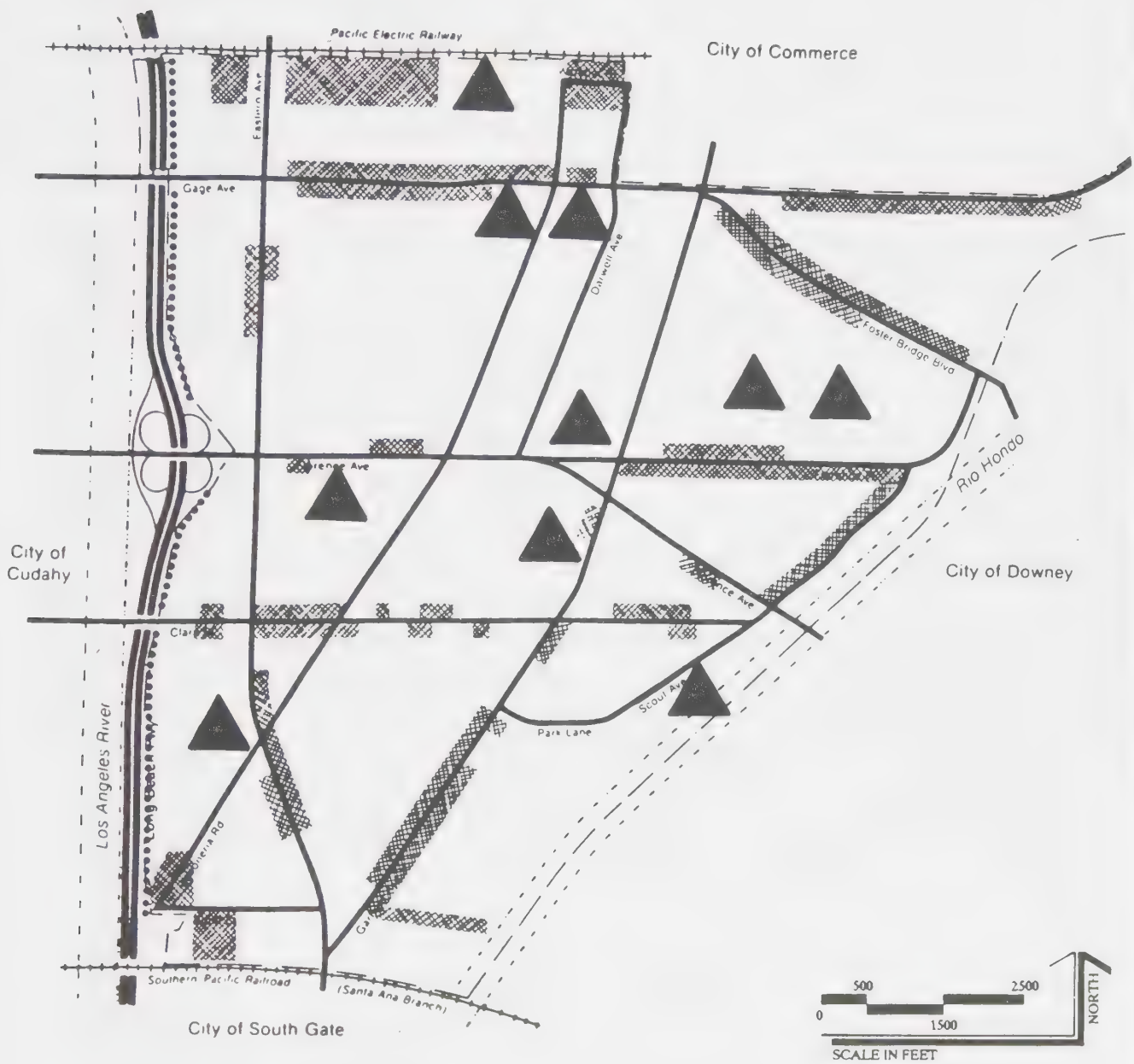
### *Noise Measurements*

Community noise levels are measured in terms of the A-weighted decibel, abbreviated dBA. A-weighting is a frequency correction that correlates overall sound pressure levels with the frequency response of the human ear. Additional units of measurement have been developed to




evaluate the longer term characteristics of sound. One of the more common noise measurements uses statistical samples in terms of percentile noise levels. For example, the  $L_{10}$  noise level represents the noise level that was exceeded 10% of the time. The  $L_{50}$  noise level represents the median noise level; half the time noise exceeded this level and half the time noise was less than this level. The  $L_{90}$  noise level represents the background noise level experienced during the monitoring period. The equivalent noise level (Leq) is a single-number representation of the fluctuating sound level in decibels over a specified period of time. The "eq" of Leq stands for "equivalent." The Leq of a time-varying sound is equivalent or equal to a constant unchanging sound of that decibel level.

The Day-Night Average Noise Level (Ldn) is used by all federal agencies and the Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) is the noise and land use compatibility criteria most widely used in the State of California. These measurements represent an average of all measured noise levels obtained over a specified period of time. The Ldn scale represents a time weighted 24-hour average noise level based on the A-weighted decibel. Time weighting refers to adjustments to noise levels that occur during certain sensitive time periods. For example, the late evening and early morning hours (between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.) receive a 10 dB weighting. The CNEL scale includes an additional 5 dB adjustment to sounds occurring in the evening (7:00 p.m. to 10 p.m.) in addition to the 10 dB adjustment to sounds occurring in the late evening and early morning hours. Ldn and CNEL are generally considered to be equivalent descriptors of the community noise environment and are within +/- 1.0 dB. Representative noise sources and sound levels are shown in Exhibits 7-2 and 7-3.





## NOISE IMPACT AREAS

-  RESIDENTIAL AREAS ADVERSELY IMPACTED
-  SCHOOLS
-  NOISE ATTENUATION WALLS



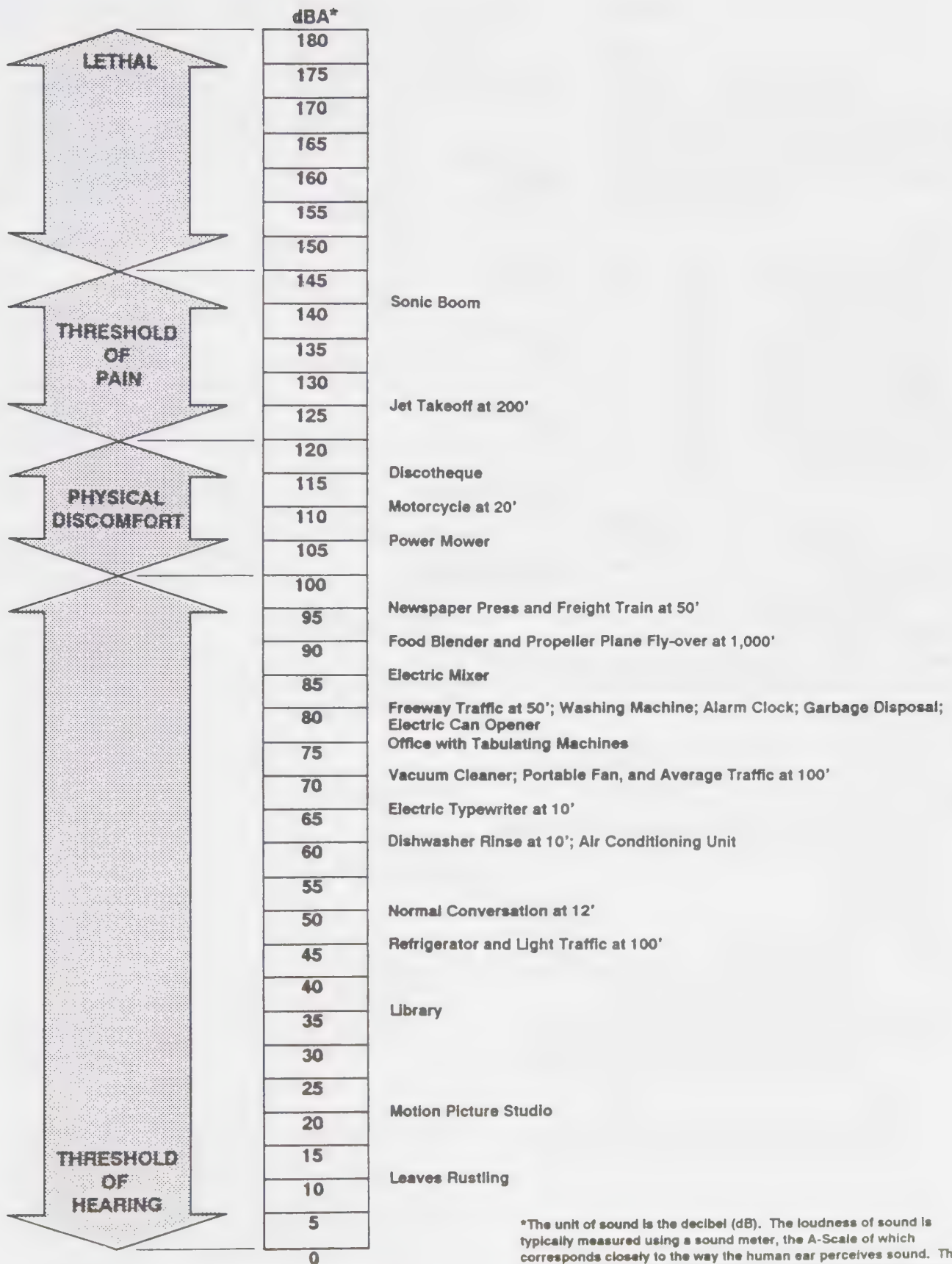


EXHIBIT 7-2  
ACOUSTICAL SCALE





LAND USE CATEGORY	COMMUNITY NOISE EXPOSURE L <sub>dn</sub> OR CNEL, dB					
	55	60	65	70	75	80
RESIDENTIAL-LOW DENSITY SINGLE FAMILY, DUPLEX MOBILE HOMES	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX
RESIDENTIAL- MULTI FAMILY	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX
TRANSIENT LODGING- MOTELS, HOTELS	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX
SCHOOLS, LIBRARIES CHURCHES, HOSPITALS, NURSING HOMES	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX
AUDITORIUMS, CONCERT HALLS, AMPITHEATRES	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX
SPORTS ARENA, OUTDOOR SPECTATOR SPORTS	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX
PLAYGROUNDS, NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX
GOLF COURSES, RIDING STABLES, WATER RECREATION, CEMETERIES	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX
OFFICE BUILDINGS, BUSINESS, COMMERCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX
INDUSTRIAL, MANUFACTURING, UTILITIES, AGRICULTURE	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX

## LEGEND



### NORMALLY ACCEPTABLE

Specified land use is satisfactory, based upon the assumption that any buildings involved are of normal conventional construction, without any special noise insulation requirements.



### CONDITIONALLY ACCEPTABLE

New construction or development should be undertaken only after a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements is made and needed noise insulation features included in the design. Conventional construction, but with closed windows and fresh air supply systems or air conditioning will normally suffice.



### NORMALLY UNACCEPTABLE

New construction or development should generally be discouraged. If new construction or development does proceed, a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements must be made and needed noise insulation features included in the design.



### CLEARLY UNACCEPTABLE

New construction or development should generally not be undertaken.

## CONSIDERATIONS IN DETERMINATION OF NOISE-COMPATIBLE LAND USE

### A. NORMALIZED NOISE EXPOSURE DESIRED

Where sufficient data exists, evaluate land use suitability with respect to a "normalized" value of CNEL or L<sub>dn</sub>. Normalized values are obtained by adding or subtracting the constants described in Table 1 to the measured or calculated value of CNEL or L<sub>dn</sub>.

### B. NOISE SOURCE CHARACTERISTICS

The land use-noise compatibility recommendations should be viewed in relation to the specific source of the noise. For example, aircraft and railroad noise is normally made up of higher single noise events than auto traffic but occurs less frequently. Therefore, different sources yielding the same composite noise exposure do not necessarily create the same noise environment. The State Aeronautics Act uses 65dB CNEL as the criterion which airports must eventually meet to protect existing residential communities from unacceptable exposure to aircraft noise. In order to facilitate the purposes of the Act, one of which is to encourage land uses compatible with the 65dB CNEL criterion wherever possible and in order to facilitate the ability of airports to comply with the Act, residential uses located in Community Noise Exposure Areas greater than 65dB should be discouraged and considered located within normally unacceptable areas.

### C. SUITABLE INTERIOR ENVIRONMENTS

One objective of locating residential units relative to a known noise source is to maintain a suitable interior noise environment at no greater than 45 dB CNEL of L<sub>dn</sub>. This requirement, coupled with the measured or calculated noise reduction performance of the type of structure under consideration, should govern the minimum acceptable distance to a noise source.

### D. ACCEPTABLE OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENTS

Another consideration, which in some communities is an overriding factor, is the desire for an acceptable outdoor noise environment. When this is the case, more restrictive standards for land use compatibility, typically below the maximum considered "normally acceptable" for that land use category, may be appropriate.



Sound levels are logarithmical in nature. This means that the 60 dB CNEL of the Long Beach Freeway and the 60 dB CNEL of Atlantic Avenue will not result in 120 dB CNEL in the City. Rather, the addition of the same noise levels will result in a 3 dBA increase in noise levels, thus 63 dB CNEL. It is safe to assume that the existing traffic noise levels in Bell Gardens and the noise from the Long Beach Freeway will create noise levels 3 dBA higher than the highest levels measured.

### *Noise Standards*

Noise influences the quality of the environment. People often relate noisy areas with chaos and disorder while quiet areas evoke more favorable perceptions. Noise can disrupt work activities, decrease the enjoyment of leisure and recreation, interfere with hearing and conversations, or cause physical discomfort. Research shows that noise is linked to stress-related health problems such as heart disease, ulcers and high-blood pressure, although direct relationships have not been established. The negative effects of noise are widely recognized and public agencies have established ways of controlling noise or minimizing their impacts. A number of federal agencies have adopted standards and recommended noise criteria to protect people in both the working and home environments. These are listed below:

- In 1969 and 1970, the Department of Labor established occupational noise regulations through the Walsh Healey Public Contracts Act and set standards for noise exposure for all businesses engaged in interstate commerce through the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA).

- The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has set design standards for different land uses. These standards are used in the planning and design of federally-funded highway projects.

- The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has environmental criteria for determining project acceptability of HUD-assisted housing and financial assistance programs. It includes noise standards of 65 dB Ldn for residential areas. These standards can be used to assess the exposure of sites to present and future noise conditions.

- In 1972, the Noise Control Act authorized the Environmental Protection Agency to publish data on the effects of noise. This included noise levels requisite to protect public health (hearing loss) and welfare (annoyance) with an adequate margin of safety.

- The State of California has adopted noise standards for areas not regulated by the federal government. State standards cover noise from motor vehicles, freeway noise affecting classrooms, noise insulation of structures, occupational noise control, and airport noise. The California Motor Vehicle Code sets noise limits for vehicles according to type of vehicle and date of manufacture.

- The California Streets and Highways Code, Division 1, Chapter 1, Article 6, requires state-funded noise abatement programs for freeway construction or any use which will result in noise levels exceeding 55 dBA  $L_{10}$  or 52 dBA Leq at existing classrooms, libraries, multi-purpose rooms, and pupil personnel services of public and private elementary and secondary schools. The noise abatement program may include acoustical treatment, elimination of windows, air conditioning, sound buffer structures and other mitigation measures.

- The Sound Transmission Control Standards, in the California Administrative Code, Title 24, Building Standards, Chapter 2.5, outline noise insulation performance standards for new hotels, motels, apartment houses, and dwellings other





than detached single-family units. It requires an interior noise level of 45 dB CNEL or less for residential projects. For projects near noise sources (airport, major roads, and industrial areas), an acoustical analysis must be made to show compliance with the standards.

■ Noise standards in the California Administrative Code, Title 21, Public Works, Chapter 25, Division of Aeronautics, require compatible land uses within a criterion CNEL contour. Compatible and incompatible land uses have been identified for areas within an airport's 65 dB CNEL. Occupational Noise Control Standards are also found in Title 8, Industrial Relations, Chapter 4, of the California Administrative Code. It provides permissible noise level exposure at the workplace in terms of permitted hours per weekday.

■ The California Office of Noise Control has prepared "Guidelines for the Preparation and Content of Noise Elements of General Plans". This provides a guide for land use compatibility of noise sensitive land uses in areas subject to noise levels of 55 to 80 dB CNEL. Residential uses are normally unacceptable in areas with 70 dB CNEL and conditionally acceptable within 60 to 70 dB CNEL.

### Existing Noise Environment

Certain activities are particularly sensitive to noise. These include sleep, study, reading, relaxation and other activities requiring intense concentration. Hospitals, libraries and schools are considered noise-sensitive uses and are best located away from noise sources. Residential areas are also recommended to be placed away from noise-impact areas. In Bell Gardens, schools, the library, and residences are sometimes found along major highways and residential developments and mobile homes are often found along major vehicle routes and near industrial areas (Exhibit 7-1).

The noise environment in the City was measured through a noise survey, performed in February 1993 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Ten locations were selected for the survey and noise was metered for a 10-minute interval at each site. Exhibit 7-4 illustrates the 10 locations and Table 7-2 summarizes the results of the survey.

Aircraft and heavy to medium duty trucks shifting into gear were sources of higher noise levels. At commercial intersections (Sites 2,3,4, and 6), there were a high percentage of trucks on the road.

TABLE 7-2  
NOISE MEASUREMENTS

Site	Location	L <sub>max</sub>	L <sub>10</sub>	L <sub>33</sub>	L <sub>50</sub>	L <sub>90</sub>
1	Northwest corner of Florence Place and Emil Avenue	76	66	63	61	56
2	Southwest corner of Garfield Avenue and Gage Avenue	86	78	76	74	70
3	Northwest corner of Clara Street and Garfield Avenue	80	76	72	70	66
4	Northeast corner of Garfield Avenue and Eastern Avenue	89	75	70	69	67





**TABLE 7-2**  
**NOISE MEASUREMENTS (continued)**

Site	Location	L <sub>max</sub>	L <sub>10</sub>	L <sub>33</sub>	L <sub>50</sub>	L <sub>90</sub>
5	Jaboneria Road, at Muller Street	76	66	66	64	58
6	Northeast corner of Florence Avenue and Eastern Avenue	84	76	74	72	66
7	Corner of Watcher Street and Colmar Avenue	77	66	58	56	52
8	Northeast corner of El Selinda Avenue and Lubec Street	67	66	61	59	54
9	Southeast corner of Loveland Street and Perry Road	66	66	64	62	58
10	Jaboneria Road, northeast of Eastern Avenue	76	74	70	67	61

L<sub>max</sub> - the maximum sound level recorded during the noise measurement duration.

L<sub>10</sub> - the sound level exceeded 10 percent of the noise measurement duration.

L<sub>33</sub> - the sound level exceeded 33 percent of the noise measurement duration.

L<sub>50</sub> - the sound level exceeded 50 percent of the noise measurement duration.

L<sub>90</sub> - the sound level exceeded 90 percent of the noise measurement duration. It is also considered the background noise level.

Source: David Evans and Associates, Inc., 1993.

### **Mobile Noise**

The major source of ambient noise in the City comes from freeway, roadway and railroad traffic. The noise generated by traffic on the Long Beach Freeway is significant. Where the freeway is closest to the City, its lanes are at a lower elevation which helps reduce noise impacts in the City. Another major source of mobile noise in Bell Gardens consists of auto and truck traffic on major roadways in the area. Based on traffic volumes and potential noise impact on residential areas, the following streets generate the greatest noise impacts: Eastern Avenue, Garfield Avenue, Florence Avenue, Gage Avenue, and parts of Clara Street.

Railroad traffic noise is intermittent throughout the day. The Southern Pacific Railroad lines run along the northern and southern boundaries of the City and are used 7 times per day on average. Trains runs at approximately 25 miles per hour.

Trains create individual noise impacts of several minutes during each pass. Noise from passing trains is dependent on the number of trains, speed, type of tracks, grade crossings, track curves, crossings bells and train horns, and type of trains. Tracks for the Southern Pacific Railroad are welded. Bolted tracks create more noise than welded ones.

While there are no airport facilities in the immediate vicinity of Bell Gardens, aircraft destined for the Los Angeles International Airport do fly over the City within the La Habra-Downey-LAX final approach pattern. Aircraft flying over Bell Gardens in their final approach are at an altitude of 3,500 feet and descending. Noise from these planes are not at levels that could disturb or disrupt local activities.

Traffic noise levels were also calculated using the FHWA Traffic Noise Prediction Model (FHWA-RD-77-109, December 1978), as modified, to generate CNEL values. Table 7-3 indicates the



distances (in feet) to the 60, 65, and 70 dB CNEL contours of key roadways in the

City. These noise levels do not consider any obstructions to the noise path, such as buildings or changes in topography, and are therefore considered worst-case scenarios.

**TABLE 7-3  
EXISTING ROADWAY NOISE LEVELS**

Street	Distance (in feet) from the Centerline to 65 CNEL	Distance (in feet) from the Centerline to 60 CNEL	Distance (in feet) from the Centerline to 55 CNEL	CNEL, (MEASURED 50' FEET FROM THE CENTERLINE)
<b>Eastern Avenue</b>				
north of Gage	107.5	326.7	1028.9	66.4
north of Florence	117.9	360.7	1136.6	66.8
south of Florence	162.2	504.3	1591.7	68.3
north of Clara	121.2	371.5	1170.9	66.9
north of Garfield	98.6	297.5	935.9	66.0
<b>Garfield Avenue</b>				
north of Florence	129.2	397.7	1254.1	67.2
south of Florence	91.7	274.4	862.5	65.6
north of Eastern	97.2	292.8	921.2	65.9
<b>Florence Avenue</b>				
west of Eastern	345.5	1084.8	3427.8	71.2
west of Jaboneria	185.5	572.2	1804.8	68.4
east of Jaboneria	202.7	627.7	1980.7	68.8
east of Garfield	157.1	479.8	1511.6	67.6
<b>Gage Avenue</b>				
east of Eastern	126.1	388.4	1224.9	67.2
west of Eastern	115.7	354.4	1117.2	66.8
east of Jaboneria	120.9	371.4	1171.0	67.0
east of Garfield	110.5	337.5	1063.3	66.6
west of Greenwood	106.2	323.6	1019.2	66.4
<b>Florence Place</b>				
east of Garfield	0	73.8	215.1	59.6
west of Scout	0	0	138.6	57.6



**TABLE 7-3  
EXISTING ROADWAY NOISE LEVELS (continued)**

Street	Distance (in feet) from the Centerline to 65 CNEL	Distance (in feet) from the Centerline to 60 CNEL	Distance (in feet) from the Centerline to 55 CNEL	CNEL, (MEASURED 50' FEET FROM THE CENTERLINE)
<b>Jaboneria Road</b>				
south of Gage	0	73.4	227.6	60.6
north of Clara	0	96.6	302.0	61.8
<b>Scout Avenue</b>				
north of Florence	0	65.0	200.5	60.0
south of Florence	0	0	102.8	57.1
<b>Clara Street</b>				
west of Eastern	68.4	211.6	667.7	65.2
east of Eastern	0	118.8	373.1	62.7
east of Garfield	0	89.2	278.3	61.4
Source: David Evans and Associates, Inc., 1993.				

Noise along transportation corridors are highest near the roadway and decrease as the distance from the roadway (noise source) increases. Thus, they may be shown as contours that indicate equal noise exposures from the roadway. Noise contour maps show the relative distance of noise levels with respect to the road centerline. Berms, walls and other barriers to the noise path reduce noise levels. Noise contour maps do not reflect the presence of noise barriers and often overestimate noise levels in a community.

Using the estimated roadway noise levels given above, a noise contour map was developed by plotting all the CNEL points to form a contour. Exhibit 7-5 provides the existing noise contours created by vehicular traffic in the City. The noise impacts of the Long Beach Freeway are shown as separate noise contours.









NOTE: Sites correspond to those listed in Table 7-1.

## EXHIBIT 7-4 NOISE SURVEY LOCATIONS







## ORDINANCE NO. 648

### AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BELL GARDENS REGARDING NONCONFORMING LOTS, USES & STRUCTURES AMENDING ARTICLE 9, CHAPTER 10, PART 106 OF THE BELL GARDENS MUNICIPAL CODE

THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BELL GARDENS DOES ORDAIN AS  
FOLLOWS:

**Section 1.** The title of Article 9, Chapter 10, Part 106, of the Bell Gardens Municipal Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

"PART 106 NONCONFORMING LOTS, USES & STRUCTURES"

**Section 2.** Article 9, Chapter 10, Part 106, Sections 106.01-106.03 of the Bell Gardens Municipal Code are hereby amended to read as follows:

"Section 106.01 Purpose. This Part sets forth standards and requirements for nonconforming lots, uses and structures.

Section 106.02 Applicability. This Part does not apply to illegal lots, uses or structures and does not apply to signs. Lots, uses or structures which are nonconforming prior to the effective date of this Ordinance which are lawfully existing as a nonconforming lot, use or structure, may be continued, changed or expanded only as provided in this Part.

Section 106.03 Definitions. For the purposes of this Part, the following definitions shall apply:

- A. Construction. Construction means to erect a structure.
- B. Existing Square Footage. Existing square footage means the existing square footage of an existing lot or structure as of the effective date of this Ordinance.
- C. Illegal Lot, Use or Structure. An illegal lot, use or structure means a lot, use or structure prohibited by Article 6 and Article 9 of this Code.
- D. Mobilehome. Mobilehome means a domicile transportable in one or more sections, designed and equipped to contain not more than one dwelling unit, to be used with or without a permanent foundation system. "Mobilehome" does not include a recreational vehicle.





E. Mobilehome Park. Mobilehome park means any lot or parcel of land where trailer sites are rented or leased, or offered for rent or lease, for two or more trailer coaches and which are conditionally permitted uses.

F. Nonconforming. Nonconforming means any lot, use or structure that was lawfully established and maintained, but which because of the application of Article 6 and Article 9 of this Code to it, no longer conforms to the regulations of the zone in which it is located.

G. Reconstruction. Reconstruction means to construct again, re-establish, reassemble, not including the construction of additional square footage to the existing building.

H. Recreational Vehicle. Recreational vehicle means a motor home, travel trailer, truck camper, or camping trailer, with or without motive power, designed for human habitation for recreational or emergency occupancy, with a living area less than 220 square feet, excluding built-in equipment such as wardrobe closets, cabinets, kitchen units or fixtures, bathrooms, and toilet rooms.

I. Remodel. Remodel means to alter the structure of or modify an existing structure and where no additional square footage is added.

J. Renovate. Renovate means to restore or change to a better state, which shall not include the construction of additional square footage to the existing building.

K. Repair. Repair means the reconstruction or renewal of any part of an existing building for the purpose of its maintenance.

L. Trailer parks. Trailer park shall have the same meaning as a mobilehome park."

**Section 3.** Article 9, Chapter 10, Part 106, Section 106.04-106.07 of the Bell Gardens Municipal Code are hereby added to read as follows:

"Section 106.04 Nonconforming lots. Lots which do not meet the minimum lot area dimension standards of Article 9 of this Code are considered nonconforming lots and the following provisions shall apply:

A. Nonconforming undeveloped lots may be developed with a structure, provided that the structure complies with Articles 6 and 9 of this Code.



B. If any lot is adjacent to another lot of the same ownership, the lots shall be legally recorded as one lot, in accordance with the State of California Subdivision Map Act, prior to the issuance of a building permit for any construction on the undeveloped lot.

C. Nonconforming lots shall not be reduced in area of dimensions.

Section 106.05 Nonconforming uses. Existing uses which are not listed as permitted uses in their respective zones are considered nonconforming uses. Existing uses which are permitted in their respective zones with a conditional use permit, but do not have a conditional use permit are considered nonconforming uses. The following provisions shall apply:

A. Nonconforming uses may not be changed to a different nonconforming use.

B. If a nonconforming use is discontinued for a period of six months or more, it shall not be re-established.

Section 106.06 Nonconforming structures. Structures which do not meet the development standards set forth in Articles 6 and 9 of this Code are considered nonconforming structures and the following provisions shall apply:

A. Nonconforming residential structures.

1. Nonconforming residential structures which are damaged or destroyed by fire, explosion, act of God, collapse or any other casualty may be reconstructed, repaired or restored. The following provisions shall apply:

a. Reconstruction shall be limited to the same square footage of the residential structure as of the effective date of this Ordinance plus an aggregate of twenty-five percent.

b. Reconstruction shall comply with all applicable provisions of Articles 6 and 9 of this Code and shall not include an increase in units from what existed at the time of damage or destruction.

c. Reconstruction shall commence within one year from the date of damage. Prior to the one year expiration period, a property owner who can demonstrate progress towards reconstruction and financial hardship may apply in writing to the Director of Community Development for a six month extension.



If reconstruction is not commenced within one year, or an extension has not been applied for, that property owner shall lose all reconstruction privileges.

d. If a hazardous condition existed or still exists on the property, any reconstruction shall not aggravate or continue the hazardous condition.

e. Reconstruction shall comply with current parking and open space standards. If current parking and open space standards cannot be met, the reconstruction shall provide at least the same amount of parking and open space that was existing on the property prior to any damage or destruction.

2. Nonconforming residential structures may be remodeled, renovated or added up to an aggregate of twenty-five percent of the existing square footage. Any remodel, renovation or addition shall comply with the current development standards of Articles 6 and 9 of this Code and shall not include an increase in units from what existed as of the effective date of this Ordinance.

**B. Nonconforming nonresidential structures.**

1. Nonconforming nonresidential structures which are damaged or destroyed by fire, explosion, act of God, collapse or any other casualty may be reconstructed, repaired or restored subject to the following:

a. Reconstruction shall be limited to the same square footage of the nonresidential structure as of the effective date of this Ordinance plus an aggregate of ten percent.

b. Reconstruction shall comply with all applicable provisions of Articles 6 and 9 of this Code.

c. Reconstruction shall commence within two years from the date of damage. Prior to the two year expiration period, a property owner who can demonstrate progress towards reconstruction and financial hardship may apply in writing to the Director of Community Development for a six month extension. If reconstruction is not commenced within two years or an extension has not been applied for, that property owner shall lose all reconstruction privileges.

d. If a hazardous condition existed or still exists on the property, any reconstruction shall not aggravate or continue the hazardous condition.





e. Reconstruction shall comply with current parking standards. If current parking standards cannot be met, the reconstruction shall provide at least the same amount of parking and open space that was existing on the property prior to any damage or destruction.

2. Nonconforming nonresidential structures may be remodeled or renovated to the existing square footage. Any remodel or renovation shall comply with the development standards of Articles 6 and 9 of this Code.

Section 106.07 Termination of nonconforming lots, uses and structures.  
Nonconforming lots, uses and structures shall be terminated according to the following schedule:

A. Nonconforming undeveloped lots: if a nonconforming undeveloped lot is adjacent to another lot of the same ownership, the lots shall be legally recorded as one lot within five years from the effective date of this Ordinance. Upon the effective date of this Ordinance, the City shall provide written notification to all property owners that own adjacent undeveloped nonconforming lots of the impending five years recordation. The written notification shall be recorded against the property with the Los Angeles County Clerk.

B. Nonconforming residential uses and structures: a nonconforming residential use or structure shall not be terminated, except for nonconforming mobilehome parks. Nonconforming mobile home parks which are not listed as a conditionally permitted use in their respective zones, or are listed but do not have a current conditional use permit, shall be terminated within forty years from the effective date of the ordinance or amendment thereto establishing the nonconforming status. A property owner may apply in writing to the Director of Community Development for a five year extension with the approval of a conditional use permit. After the five year extension has expired, a property owner may apply in writing to the Director of Community Development for one more five year extension with the approval of a conditional use permit. No additional extensions by conditional use permit may be granted unless the applicant demonstrates that refusal to grant additional time would constitute an unconstitutional taking of property.

C. Nonconforming nonresidential uses and structures: a nonconforming nonresidential use or structure shall be terminated within forty years from the effective date of the adoption of this ordinance or any ordinance or amendment thereto establishing the nonconforming status. A property own may apply in writing to the Director of Community Development for a five year extension with the approval of a conditional use permit in accordance with Part 102 of the Bell



Gardens Zoning Ordinance. After the five year extension has expired, a property owner may apply in writing to the Director of Community Development for one more five year extension with the approval of a conditional use permit." No additional extensions by conditional use permit may be granted unless the applicant demonstrates that refusal to grant additional time would constitute an unconstitutional taking of property.

**Section 4.** The City Clerk shall certify to the passage and adoption of this Ordinance and cause the same to be published in the manner presented by law, and this Ordinance shall become effective thirty days after its second reading.

Passed, approved and adopted this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 1995.

\_\_\_\_\_  
J. Arnoldo Beltrán, City Attorney

\_\_\_\_\_  
Maria S. Chacon, Mayor

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ronald L. Hart, City Clerk

C124921801







